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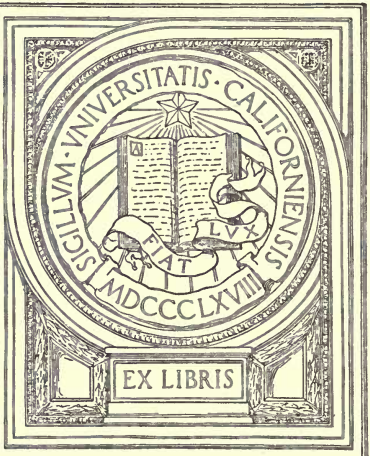

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FOURTEEN

SERMONS

PREACHED ON

Several Occasions.

By THOMAS SECKER, LL.D.
Late Lord Archbishop of CANTERBURY.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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SERMON I.

Preached before the UNIVERSITY of OXFORD, on ACT-SUNDAY in the Afternoon, *July* 8, 1733.

DEUT. xxxii. 46, 47.

And he ſaid unto them, Set your Hearts unto all the Words, which I teſtify among you this Day; which ye ſhall command your Children to obſerve to do, all the Words of this Law. For it is not a vain Thing for you: becauſe it is your Life; and through this Thing ye ſhall prolong your Days in the Land whither ye go over Jordan to poſſeſs it.

THESE Words contain the laſt Exhortation, which *Moſes*, the great Founder of the *Jewiſh* State, gave his Countrymen, on the very Day wherein he had Notice of his approaching Death. He had freed them, with infinite Danger to himſelf, from *Egyptian* Tyranny, and the worſe Bondage of Idolatry and Superſtition: he had received for them, from God's own Mouth, ſuch Laws of Life, as in their Circumſtances were moſt conducive to Virtue and Happineſs: theſe he had delivered to his Peo-

ple, eſtabliſhed on the ſureſt Foundation of Regard; affectionate Reverence to the Object of all Duty, and Author of all Good: he had laboured, with infinite Patience, through a long Courſe of Years, to cultivate in them this important Principle of religious Obedience: and now, drawing near to the Cloſe of a Life ſpent in their Service, he recommends it again; firſt, with all the Force of a moſt perſuaſive Eloquence; and afterwards by every Charm, that Poetry itſelf could add; ſetting Happineſs and Miſery before them, in an Ode of divine Sublimity and Spirit, which they are commanded by Heaven to learn themſelves, and teach their Poſterity. This therefore he communicates in a ſolemn Manner to the whole Congregation, as the Concluſion of all his Cares for them; and then takes his final Leave in the Exhortation of the Text, confirming once more at his Death the Importance of thoſe Precepts, which he had been giving them through his whole Life. *Set your Hearts, &c.*

Their own Obſervance of God's Law was ſecuring the Felicity of one Generation only: but educating their Children in Religion and Virtue, this was perpetuating Bleſſings to each Part of the Society and to the whole: laſting Proſperity and Peace, in the good Land they were going to poſſeſs; and in that *better Country* *, of which it was an Emblem, *Life for evermore* †.

* Heb. xi. 16. † Pſ. cxxxiii. 4.

The Words afford then a juſt Occaſion for ſpeaking,

I. Of the Advantages of right Education; and,

II. The Duty of endeavouring, that theſe Advantages may be obtained.

I. The Advantages, and indeed Neceſſity, of right Education.

Other Creatures arrive, without their own Care, at the ſmall Perfection, of which they are capable, and there ſtop: but the whole of Man's Exiſtence, that appears, is a State of Diſcipline and Progreſſion. Youth is his Preparation for maturer Years: this whole Life, for another to come. Nature gives the Abilities to improve; but the actual Improvement, we are to have the Pleaſure and the Reward of giving ourſelves and one another. Some Minds indeed, as ſome Soils, may be fruitful without Cultivation; others, barren with it; but the general Neceſſity is the ſame in both Caſes; and in both, the richeſt, and moſt capable of producing good Fruit, will be over-run, if neglected, with the rankeſt and worſt Weeds.

Now the only univerſal Precaution, that can be in this Reſpect, Chriſtianity hath furniſhed, by introducing a ſtated Method of Inſtruction, unknown before; which, joined

with the Parents private Care, is, to the Generality of Mankind, ſufficient for the Purpoſes of intellectual and moral Improvement. But to Perſons of more extenſive Influence, a more particular and appropriated Inſtitution is neceſſary; for the World's Sake as well as their own. This, with regard to the Teachers of Religion, Men almoſt without Exception acknowledge: but too commonly forget it in another Caſe, of no leſs Importance; theirs I mean, whoſe Authority is to inforce the Laws of Conduct, and whoſe Example to lead the Way in Life. Here ſometimes a wrong Care, often an imperfect one, is taken by the fondeſt Parents. The outward Accompliſhments and Decencies of Behaviour they teach them with great Exactneſs, and do well: but then, without the leaſt further Proviſion, ſend them abroad into the School of the World, there to learn what they can. The Conſequence is, what muſt naturally be expected: Trifles and Follies, ever readieſt at hand, and beſt ſuited to the unjudging Mind, get firſt into Poſſeſſion; and, in many, leave Place for nothing elſe to enter. Such, unqualified for the valuable Employments of Life, muſt loſe their Days in the low Amuſements of a falſe and effeminate Politeneſs; hoping for no higher a Character, than a Set of Creatures, equally contemptible, can give one another by mutual Admiration; and happy after all, if they chance to preſerve an innocent Worthleſſneſs.

But ſuppoſe Room left for ſome Attention to Knowledge; not even the Forms of decent Carriage, though obvious Things, are fully learnt without regular Application: what ſort of Acquaintance then with Science muſt that be, which is picked up occaſionally and by Accident? A thorough one indeed we muſt judge it, were the firſt Appearance to determine us; that Air of Sufficiency, with which a Perſon thus educated for the moſt part delivers his Sentiments. But if we examine, as the World will, what is under this Appearance to ſupport it; then a Mind is diſcovered, thoughtleſſly perſuaded of its own Knowledge, where it is very ignorant; and affecting Knowledge, even though it is conſcious of having none: firſt making haſtily whatever Determination is faſhionable, about Queſtions half underſtood, and not at all conſidered, be their Importance what it will; and then going on immediately to act upon this Determination, without the leaſt Diffidence, or the leaſt Thought what the Laws of human Actions are: unmoved by Reaſon, and ſcorning it; but changing frequently on mere Fancy, and fluctuating through Life without Rule or Guide, from the forward Extravagancies of a profligate Youth, to the End of an early and deſpicable old Age.

The Benefits of Converſation greatly depend on the previous Attainments, both of thoſe, who are ſuppoſed to communicate

Knowledge, and to receive it. If therefore Inſtruction be neglected, Converſation will grow trifling; if perverted, dangerous. Still Acquaintance with the World, however corrupted, may be an uſeful Part of Education; but then it muſt be the laſt. It gives a beautiful Poliſh: but of this the beſt prepared Mind will be the moſt ſuſceptible. It teaches many Things: but good or bad, according as the Learner is qualified to diſtinguiſh. He, whom improved good Senſe hath enabled to obſerve upon common Practice, will extract Wiſdom and Virtue from the Vices and Follies of Mankind. But ſuch as are ignorant, and capable only of imitating, will of courſe admire the worſt of what they ſee; and be the more effectually ruined, the more they aim to be accompliſhed. It is therefore a mercileſs Thing, to throw out poor Creatures, unprincipled in what is right, to ſhift for themſelves where ſo much Wrong is to be learnt.

Regular Cultivation of the Underſtanding then is what good Education begins with. The earlieſt Branch of this, Acquaintance with uſeful Languages, unlocks the Treaſures of ancient Learning, and makes the Improvements of every Age and Climate our own. Then the politer Parts of Literature moſt agreeably open the Faculties, and form the Taſte of young Perſons; adorn our Diſcourſe and endear our Company, in riper Years; give a Grace to Wiſdom and Virtue; relieve the

the Fatigue of our buſy Hours, and elegantly fill up the Leiſure of our vacant ones. At the ſame time the Art of juſt Reaſoning opportunely comes in, to curb the Licence of Imagination, and direct its Force; to fix the Foundations of Science; aſcertain the Degrees of Probability, and unveil ſpecious Error. With this Guide we proceed ſecurely. Knowledge of Nature opens the Univerſe to our View; enables us to judge worthily of the Conſtitution of Things; ſecures us from the Weakneſs of vulgar Superſtitions; and contributes, in many ways, to the Health and Security, the Convenience and Pleaſure of human Life. If from hence we go on to ſurvey Mankind; a Contemplation of their different States in different Ages, and eſpecially of their ancient Regulations and Laws, the publick Wiſdom of brave and great Nations, will furniſh Variety of uſeful Reflexions to the Mind: often teaching us to improve our own Condition, often to be happy in it.

It muſt be obvious, how rational an Entertainment theſe Things are; and how uſeful Materials they furniſh, to ripen and perfect that Prudence and good Senſe, which not only carries us through the Buſineſs of Life, but gives Reliſh and Stability to the Pleaſures of it. If then Knowledge ought to be attained, the Way to it ought to be made eaſy; by removing Difficulties, cautioning againſt Miſtakes, and leading forwards in a right Method.

Above all, Application ought to be ſecured, by the Authority of a prudent Inſtructor; and Emulation excited, by a Number of Fellow-learners.

But if Education ſtop here, it hath only given Abilities and Powers, the Direction of which to right or wrong Purpoſes is greatly uncertain ſtill. He that knows not the proper Uſe of his own Being; *what is Man and whereto ſerveth he, what is his Good and what is his Evil* *; may eaſily employ his other Knowledge ſo, as to be much the worſe for it. This Inquiry then is the important one. Various Methods of conducting Life preſent themſelves; contradictory Inclinations demand to be gratified: the Conflict is painful; the End of it may be more ſo: which Way is right, and which ſhall we take? Now there is a Science, that can direct us here: can ſhew us an inward Principle, endued with native Authority to govern all the reſt; Obedience to which gives a ſteady Aim and Self-approbation to our Conduct, beſtows on us the trueſt Satisfactions of Life, and delivers us from its foreſt Evils. Nor are Morals only the Source of private Happineſs, but the great Foundation of mutual Security, the only one of Eſteem and Friendſhip amongſt Men. A Perſon of true Goodneſs, though otherwiſe of ſmall Accompliſhments, will always make an amiable Figure in Society, and be a valuable

* Eccluſ. xviii. 8.

Part

Part of it: whereas, without a virtuous Heart, the ſuperior Abilities of the great Man will only render him a more extenſive Miſchief; and the deceitful Agreeableneſs of the gay Man qualify him to miſlead, betray, and ruin, more entirely, thoſe with whom he converſes. Thus where-ever Wickedneſs increaſes, will Miſery increaſe alſo; till the End be univerſal Confuſion. For though a Conſtitution, ſinking under Vice, may preſerve for ſome time the florid Look of Health; yet inward Strength, and laſting Vigour, are what nothing but Virtue, publick and private, can give to any People. This is that true Wiſdom, *in whoſe right Hand is Length of Days; and in her Left, Riches and Honour* *.

Now the Foundations of Virtue are indeed laid by Nature, both in the Reaſon and Affections of Mankind, though fallen: but Reaſon is ſo often inattentive, and Affections are ſo eaſily depraved, that without further Care, thoſe moral Principles, which make the beſt Part of our inward Frame, will in moſt Men be greatly obſcured, and in ſome, to all Appearance, quite effaced. And, were even thoſe of righter Minds left each to form their private Syſtem, Tenderneſs for their own Failings, or Prejudice for thoſe of the World, would often lead them into imperfect Notions and wrong Practice. One indiſpenſable Branch then of liberal Education is an accurate Inſtitution in

* Prov. iii. 16.

this

this important Science: to pull off the Diſguiſes which Vice affects to wear, and place the Conſequences of it in a juſt Light; to point out the leſs obvious Advantages of Virtue, and ſhew its Reſtraints to end in real Freedom; to repreſent the ſtrict Connexions of its ſeveral Parts, and make ſtrong the Proof, that *Knowledge of Wickedneſs is not Wiſdom; neither at any time the Counſel of Sinners Prudence* *.

And when ſhould the Science of Life be taught, but in the Beginning of Life; before evil Habits are added to original Depravity: whilſt the natural Regard to Truth and Right, the only inward Reſtraint of incautious Youth, remains comparatively uncorrupt; and the Seeds of Sin lie yet ſomewhat looſe on the Surface of the Mind; much harder to be cleared away, when once they have taken Root, and twiſted themſelves ſtrongly about the Heart. This therefore is the favourable Opportunity, in which Authority and Reaſon muſt exert at once their joint Force. For Diſcipline without Inſtruction is mere Tyranny: and Inſtruction without Diſcipline, little better than uſeleſs Talk. Things owned to be fit and good are neglected, becauſe diſagreeable; Things evidently hurtful purſued for preſent Pleaſure. Here Authority comes in to the Aid of Reaſon; inforces virtuous Application; reſtrains vicious Indulgences; tempers the Warmth of Youth; prepares us for the future Subordinations of

* Eccluſ xix. 22.

Life;

Life; conducts us safe through the unseen Dangers of our most dangerous Time; and then by gentle Degrees withdraws its Influence, as the Power of Self-government grows up. Where Want of this Care leaves young Persons too soon in the worst of Hands, their own; it is dreadful to see, into what irretrievable Miseries they plunge, in the very Beginning of their Course. And therefore, the more Liberty they are afterwards to enjoy; the more prudent, though not stricter, Restraint they should be under at first; and entered by slow Steps into the World at large, with all possible Cautions given them of the Hazards they are going upon, and (God knows) have little Reason to be eager for.

But the most serious Part of Education is wanting still: the Part which leads us, by the Esteem of moral Excellence, to honour and love that Being, in whom the Perfection of it dwells; and extends our inward Sense of Duty, suggested first by the low and short-lived Relations between us and our Fellow-creatures, to the highest possible and eternal Object of it, the Creator and Ruler of this Universe. He, by whose Pleasure we are, from whose Favour all that we enjoy and hope for comes, according to whose Determination our whole Existence shall be happy or miserable, is not surely one with whom we are unconcerned. And, however a base Nature may value itself on the impotent Affectation of slighting God;

every

every worthy Mind will delight to expreſs that Veneration, and pay that Obedience, which are due to Him, who is the Lord of all: due by every ſtrongeſt Claim, whether unaſſiſted Reaſon diſcover the general Laws of his moral Kingdom; or infinite Wiſdom, the beſt Judge of our Circumſtances, condeſcend to adapt to them further Obligations. It is indeed the Senſe of our living under His Government and Care, that makes our Condition of Being deſireable. Religion, filling the Mind with that Object which it naturally ſeeks, a ſovereign Protector, infinitely wiſe and good, effectually excludes all ſuperſtitious Terrors; and, far from depreſſing the tendereſt Spirit, exalts us into every Thought and every Hope, that is great and noble. Turbulence of Paſſions, and Obſtinacy of Self-will, theſe are the Things, that tear and weaken the Soul: Reverence of God, by awing them into Compoſure, ſtrengthens every inward Principle that ought to be ſtrong; and if it prunes the Luxuriances, promotes by ſo doing the Vigour of the Mind. Religion comprehends at once every Motive, both of Virtue and of private Intereſt, that can either direct or ſupport the Heart in every Part of Conduct; joins in perpetual Union our Duty and our Happineſs; and makes the univerſal Scheme of Things conſiſtent, beautiful, and good.

Surely then, Principles of ſuch a Tendency ought to have an early and diligent Cultivation in

in every Breaſt; but theirs eſpecially, whoſe Rank or Profeſſion will make it of the moſt publick Conſequence. They, who object againſt this Care, as inſtilling Prejudices, ſhould conſider, that Virtue, Honour, Decency, are Prejudices juſt of the ſame Sort; and think what would follow, were Men to enter upon Life free from the Bias of any one good Quality. But in Truth, God himſelf, not Man, hath planted theſe juſt Prepoſſeſſions in the Heart: and all that Education does, is to favour their Growth. Religion, and the Evidences for it, may indeed be unfairly repreſented by its Teachers: and what Part of Knowledge may not? But are only the Teachers of Religion capable of miſrepreſenting it? Hath not every vicious Man as ſtrong a Motive to incline him againſt it, as even thoſe maintained by it have, to incline them in its Favour? Hath not Fondneſs of Novelty, and Affectation of ſuperior Senſe and Learning, as great Influence on ſome Perſons, as Credulity can have on others? Do we not every Day ſee Men determine poſitively againſt Religion, who are known never once to have thought of it in earneſt; and attack it by all the unfair Arts in the World, whilſt they themſelves are declaiming againſt ſuch Arts? Do we not ſee them even triumph in the Thought of its being falſe, though the everlaſting Happineſs of every good Man depends upon its Truth? And are theſe the worthy Spirits, to whoſe Tutoring young Perſons are to be delivered over

in

in their native Ignorance, for Fear of Prejudices? Or is it not on all Accounts wiſe and fit, that the Mind, whilſt untainted with evil Communication or Vice, ſhould have the moſt important of all Truths confirmed to it by proper Arguments; and be formed to the right and happy Temper, of chearful Obedience to the greateſt and beſt of Beings, *the Father and God of our Lives* *.

Since therefore Inſtruction of Youth in Religion, Virtue, and Knowledge, appears attended with ſo many Advantages; it follows,

II. That all Perſons concerned ſhould endeavour, with united Care, in their ſeveral Stations, that theſe Advantages may be effectually obtained; eſpecially in the Places dedicated to that Purpoſe.

The publick Care, in this Reſpect, we muſt ever gratefully own, continued through a long Succeſſion of our Princes; and flouriſhing ſtill in its Height, under the Adminiſtration of a King, zealous for the Happineſs of his People, and reſolute to maintain all the Rights of all his Subjects. Next to whoſe aſſured and experienced Protection we cannot but graciouſly acknowledge the gracious Munificence of his Royal Conſort; therefore bountiful to Religion and Learning, becauſe ſhe moſt intimately knows their Value, and moſt affectionately eſteems them.

* Ecclus xxiii. 4.

Secure

Secure then of the publick Favour to whatever is connected with the publick Good; we have only Their Attention to ſollicit who are perſonally intereſted: Parents, or whoever ſupply their Place; the Conductors of Education; and, the young Perſons to be educated.

To you, who are Parents, Nature itſelf hath given a tender Concern for your Childrens Welfare, as your own; and reminds you juſtly, that, as you have brought them into the Dangers of Life, your Buſineſs it is to provide, that they get well through them. Now the only Proviſion commonly attended to, of Wealth and Honours, can never produce Happineſs; unleſs the Mind, on which all depends, be taught to enjoy them properly. Fortune, without this, will but lead them to more abandoned Sallies of Extravagance; and Rank expoſe them to more publick Cenſure. Education then is the great Care, with which you are entruſted; ſcarce more for their Sakes than your own. You may be negligent of your Son's Inſtruction: but it is on you, as well as himſelf, that his Ignorance and Contemptibleneſs will bring both Reproach and Inconvenience. You may be regardleſs of his Morals: but you may be the Perſon, who will at laſt the moſt ſeverely feel his Want of them. You may be indifferent about his Religion: but remember, Dutifulneſs to you is one great Precept of Religion: and all the reſt promote ſuch Habits,

as

as you may bitterly repent, when it is too late, your Omiſſion to cultivate in him; and live and die miſerable on his Account, whom timely Care would have made your Joy and Honour.

Parents therefore ſhould always be Friends to Education, and to Places of Education: ſhould wiſh well to them; and never, without great Reaſon, think ill of them. The Enemies of Religion and Virtue, an increaſing Number, will of courſe be Enemies to thoſe who teach them; and the more ſo, the more carefully they teach them. The Enemies to either Part of our happy Conſtitution, will look with an evil Eye on Eſtabliſhments, deſigned for the Support of both. More private Motives will excite injurious Treatment of them from ſome Perſons. And even thoſe of better Meaning may be engaged, by Miſinformations and Prejudices, to paſs harſh Judgments and ſay unfriendly Things. But reaſonable Men will always diſtinguiſh, by what Perſon, on what Grounds, with what Temper and what Views, diſadvantageous Characters are given, or Reports raiſed. They will alſo conſider, that the unhappy Diviſions of this Nation cannot but have cauſed, on all Sides, in Length of Time, ſome Degree of wrong Opinion and wrong Conduct towards one another; mutual Jealouſies and Miſunderſtandings between thoſe, whoſe Intereſts, and whoſe Intentions, were in general the ſame: Differences, which

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it muſt be ruinous to heighten, dangerous to continue, uſeleſs to paſs Judgment in; but moſt important to reconcile, by ſuch Conduct on every Hand, as may give no Suſpicion of ill Deſign, but all Proofs of good. Friendly Methods will not fail to unite the Hearts of Men; and make them ſuſceptible of mutual Advice and Improvement, Aſſiſtance and Benefit. Whoever will view the Seats of Learning, with theſe Conſiderations preſent to his Mind, will judge favourably concerning them; and not only admire the pious Bounty of our Anceſtors, who dedicated theſe delightful Retreats to Knowledge and Virtue, founded theſe beautiful Structures, enriched them with ſuch amazing Treaſures of Literature, and provided ſo nobly for the Accommodation of fit Perſons to enjoy and communicate the Inſtruction of them; but be thankful for the many and great Bleſſings, which they have conveyed to every Age, and will, we hope, derive to lateſt Poſterity.

Ideas of Perfection are viſionary Things: but look into Fact, and where will thoſe, who inveigh againſt the Education of our Univerſities, recommend a more improving one? The indulgent Softneſs of the Parents Family is apt, at beſt, to give young Perſons a moſt unhappy Effeminateneſs; the Governor, if he hath Abilities, hath ſcarce ever Authority to inforce Diligence; Want of Rivals keeps the Mind languid; and upon the

whole, ſeldom any Thing conſiderable comes out. If now the contrary Method be taken, of ſending them, raw and uninſtructed, to viſit foreign Countries; what Improvement will Minds unprepared for Improvement make there? As to Religion; the Diſuſe of frequenting its Exerciſes, and the daily View of its Corruptions, will be in Danger of effacing all regard to it. With reſpect to Morals; in the Midſt of ſo great Temptation, ſo little Reſtraint, and ſo general bad Example, it muſt be a high Degree of Virtue, that can keep itſelf in Countenance. Then for ſuch Opportunities of Inſtruction, as different Laws, Manners, and Cuſtoms, may be ſuppoſed to give; theſe require a Mind trained up beforehand to Attention and Judgment. On all others they will be juſt as likely to make wrong Impreſſions as right, if they make any: but indeed what Impreſſions of all kinds are uſually made, and how far the Improvements brought home anſwer the national Expence for them, lies within the Compaſs of daily Obſervation.

If then, in the next Place, we compare at leaſt foreign Univerſities with our own: is their Theology worthier of God, more conformable to Reaſon and primitive Chriſtianity; is their Philoſophy juſter and more ſolid, leſs full of Imagination and Hypotheſis; than that of our great Countrymen, whoſe Names I need not ſuggeſt? Will the ornamental Re-

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wards of Learning be more fitly beſtowed, where no Time previous to the Application for them is required? Will Induſtry be more univerſal, without any Inſpection over it; Behaviour more regular, without any Rule ſet to it; than where young Perſons are formed into orderly Societies, diſtinguiſhed by proper Habits, reſtrained to proper Hours, obliged to proper Studies, and watched over with continual Care? Miſcarriages, after all, will happen in ſuch Numbers of ſuch an Age. But the general good Order that reigns here, to moſt Foreigners, not the worſt Judges in this Caſe, appears incredible when related, and very ſurpriſing when ſeen. It remains only to wiſh, what there never was more Hope of; that, as our Univerſities have long excelled all others, they may continually improve upon themſelves.

But ſtill, Parents muſt not expect their Childrens Improvement ſhould be great, unleſs they contribute their own Share to it. If Indolence and Luxury be taught them by bad Example, or Prejudice againſt every thing ſerious and praiſe-worthy by bad Converſation, before they come hither; if they come with little or no Charge given about Regularity and Application, but Licence be claimed for them in Proportion to their Quality; or if, after the mere Form of a ſhort Confinement here, they are let immediately looſe, to wear off by Negligence and Profligateneſs the

few ſlight good Impreſſions that could be made; what room hath the Parent to hope for Improvement, or complain if none be found?

But let him be careful in his own Duty firſt; then the Perſons, to whom he commits his Child afterwards, will undertake with ſome Comfort an Office, laborious and important at all Times; but particularly ſo in an Age of uncommon Corruption: when the Expectations of good Men are more than ever fixed on their diſcharging this Truſt well; and their Failure will give bad ones the double Joy, of ſeeing Wickedneſs flouriſh, and accuſing Them for it. Complaints indeed of unjuſt Accuſations were never better grounded: but Complaints alone will do little Good; and even deſerved Returns of Bitterneſs may do much Harm. The only Remedy is, that *by well doing we put to Silence** the Unreaſonableneſs of ill Perſons, and ſecure the Protection of thoſe who mean well.

The Educator of Youth therefore will firſt perfect himſelf in each needful Qualification, and then apply to forming others. In every Science he will join the Diſcoveries of later Times with ſuch Inſtruction, as may render the Learning of former Ages intelligible; and prudently direct the more particular Attention of each Perſon to ſuch Things, as may chiefly relate to their future Part in Life.

* 1 Pet. ii. 15.

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The Foundations of Religion he will lay deep and ſtrong: recommending the great Articles of it, not to the Paſſions of thoſe under his Care, by Warmth and Vehemence; but to their Reaſon and Faith, by juſt Explications and concluſive Arguments: neither loading Revelation with unauthoriſed Doctrines and needleſs Difficulties; nor yielding up the leaſt real Part of it, to defend the reſt; nor altering the leaſt, to give it a more plauſible Appearance. A diſputing and cavilling Temper he will endeavour to repreſs; but will treat with all Tenderneſs the Doubts of an ingenuous Mind; and ever encourage that ſacred Regard to Truth, which makes Men worthy of Eſteem, even whilſt they err, and is the great Security of their returning into the right Way. He will take fit Opportunity of ſhewing, how cloſely a due Regard to the Teachers of Religion and Virtue is connected with the Practice of both. But the Perſons, whoſe Employment teaching them is to be, he will ſtudiouſly warn, that the only way of ſecuring this Regard is, by uſeful and exemplary Lives; prudent and inoffenſive Conduct; and ſo hearty a Friendſhip to all juſt and reaſonable Liberty, as may give them unſuſpected Authority to oppoſe the diſſolute Licentiouſneſs, that in vain aſſumes its Name.

To Civil Government he will conſcientiouſly teach that dutiful Obedience and Honour, which Chriſtianity requires all Subjects to pay;

and which the happieſt Subjects in the World ought to pay with the chearfulleſt Gratitude. He will diſcourage with all poſſible Care, the Rage of party Zeal; which warm and unexperienced Minds too often miſtake for publick Spirit. Admitted in this fair Diſguiſe, it poſſeſſes the whole Man; tinctures his Way of thinking on almoſt every Subject; leads him to hate and injure worthy Perſons, to admire and aſſociate amongſt very bad ones; with whom this immoral Temper ſtands in the ſtead of all Merit, whilſt indeed it hinders the acquiring of any. As Life goes on, theſe Evils increaſe: of which all the World complains, but unhappily indulges them at the ſame time; inſtead of each curbing, on his own Side, the Eagerneſs and Keenneſs of ſo malevolent a Principle. Young Perſons ſhould therefore be reminded, that the Seats of Learning are purpoſely ſecreted from the buſy Scenes of Life; that the Time for engaging in thoſe will come but too ſoon: and mean while the generous Ardor of Youth ſhould be exerted in making the Preparation of uſeful Knowledge and virtuous Habits; but ever tempered with ſuch Mildneſs and Diffidence concerning Matters, of which they need not judge yet, as they will every Day ſee more neceſſary in order to judge and act right.

This is indeed one Part of Morals: and on every other Part the Director of Education will have an attentive Eye. Even the Sallies of a well-

well-meant Fervor he will prudently moderate, when they give Religion a gloomy Appearance, or add to it a needleſs Burden. But much more ſtrictly will he guard againſt the oppoſite Extreme of Libertiniſm and Profaneneſs: labouring to keep up, not only an outward Form of Regularity, but a ſerious Awe of God, and Senſe of Duty, in every Mind; watching over each Tendency to Vice; and conſidering wilful Neglect of Application, as a dangerous Kind of Guilt. In order to this great End of preſerving Morals, he will preſerve and countenance, as far as it remains poſſible, that Temperance of living, Simplicity of Appearance, and Frugality of Expence, which are uſually brought hither, and ſo peculiarly ſuit this Inſtitution; which keep the Mind in fit Temper for the Exerciſe of its Faculties, and defend it from the Corruptions of Luxury and Vanity; lay the Foundations of Health and Prudence in Men for the reſt of their Days, and prepare them to be virtuous and eaſy in whatever Stations may prove their Share.

It remains only now, that the Perſon, of whom all this Care is taken, ſhould know and improve his own Happineſs. Too many there are, that ſet out upon the important Journey of Life, without a ſkilful, or perhaps a friendly Hand, to conduct them through the Difficulties of the untried and hazardous Way. Theſe are greatly excuſeable in their Faults,

and pitiable in their Miſeries. But of you God and Man will expect Attainments, that may bear Proportion to the Advantages, with which you are bleſſed. Nature engages your Parents; Duty, Honour, and Intereſt, your Inſtructors, to conſult your Welfare: which they deſire as much as yourſelves, and underſtand better. Reſtrain therefore and apply yourſelves as they direct; though you not only feel it painful, but ſee it not yet beneficial: and truſt thoſe, who have all imaginable Claim to be truſted, that, by quick Degrees, the Pain will wear off, and the Benefit be evident.

Their Province, who are devoted to the Service of Religion, will be to appear, perhaps after a very ſhort Preparation, in an Age ſtrongly prejudiced againſt them and their Function: ſure Objects, without Merit, of Contempt and Hatred; but, with it, capable ſtill of being eſteemed and uſeful. This Situation, you ſee, requires in the firſt Place, that you carefully acquaint yourſelves with the Proofs, the Doctrines and Precepts of the Goſpel Revelation. Fear not therefore making free Inquiry into every Thing. Others inquire with bad Intention: if you do it not with good, you will want true Learning, to oppoſe againſt the falſe and half-Learning of Unbelievers. Only begin not your Inquiry, till you are qualified: and end it not, till you have conſidered Matters throughly. Young Minds, and often the moſt generous of them, are apt

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to purſue Truth with an Impatience, that occaſions their miſſing it. Nothing ought ever to ſtand againſt full Evidence, well weighed: but many Things may induce thoſe, who have yet had little Time for Thought, to think again, and be diffident in the mean while. For not only the World too commonly imputes to a Man, all his Life, the indigeſted Notions of his early Years; but Perſons liſt themſelves by poſitive Talk, and then cannot retreat. With this Caution, and with due Method, Diligence will go far in acquiring Knowledge. But Knowledge is only one Part of what muſt be attended to. The unguarded Conduct, even of Perſons younger Days, will be treaſured up in many a malicious Memory to their future Diſadvantage: and, though an Affectation of untimely Gravity ſits ill, yet Innocence and Piety are the Duties of every Age. They eſpecially, whoſe Profeſſion will make a ſtricter Abſtinence from doubtful and imprudent Pleaſures expected of them hereafter, will find it much the ſafeſt and eaſieſt to begin now; and, by an uniform Life, grow regularly up into that Eſteem, which their Deſtination will require.

And though neither the ſame Diligence of Application, nor ſuch Accuracy of Conduct, may appear neceſſary in thoſe of higher Rank; yet an improved Underſtanding muſt be an Advantage, and the Want of it a Blemiſh, proportionably conſpicuous, as the Station, in

which either appears, is publick: and the Choice, how Life ſhall be ſpent, is always important in the ſame Degree, as the Perſons are who make it. Such therefore, of all others, ſhould not take it haſtily for granted, that an immoral Courſe is right. To begin with Virtue, at leaſt till fair Inquiry rejects it, is evidently the ſafe Part. No one ever bitterly condemned himſelf, that he had ſpent his younger Years ſoberly: many have, that they did not. Then, ſome Degrees of Vice are owned to produce Miſery: and every Vice leads on to worſe Degrees of itſelf, and Variety of others. Or, though a vicious Perſon could depend on ſuffering no preſent Harm; yet he cannot fail of doing a great deal: and a Man would not chooſe, that the chief Traces, which he leaves behind him, to mark out his Paſſage through Life, ſhould be ſo many Injuries done his Fellow-creatures. At leaſt no one would venture upon this, till he were ſure there is no ſuperior Inſpector of his Conduct. Now there cannot be Certainty againſt Religion: and there are ſuch Evidences for it, as muſt require more than a few ſlight Cavils, or bold Jeſts, to overturn them. A careful Examination then it juſtly demands. And if upon ſuch Examination it prove true, as undoubtedly it will; remember it is a moſt ſerious Truth, in which the foremoſt of Mankind is equally concerned with the meaneſt. Therefore in a Caſe of ſuch Moment, let no falſe Shame, nor favourite Paſſion prevail over you; but *give your*

Hearts early to the Lord that made you *. Lay the Foundation of your Lives here, on the firm Ground of Chriſtian Faith; and build upon it whatever is juſt and good, worthy and noble, till the Structure be complete in moral Beauty. The World, into which you are entering, lies in wait with Variety of Temptations. Unfavourable Sentiments of Religion will ſoon be ſuggeſted to you; and all the Snares of Luxury, falſe Honour, and Intereſt, ſpread in your Way; which with moſt of your Rank are too ſucceſsful, and to many fatal. Happy the few, that in any Part of Life become ſenſible of their Errors; and, with painful Reſolution, tread back the wrong Steps, which they have taken! But happieſt of Men is he, who, by an even Courſe of right Conduct, from the firſt, as far as human Frailty permits, hath at once avoided the Miſeries of Sin, the Sorrows of Repentance, and the Difficulties of Virtue; who not only can think of his preſent State with Compoſure, but reflect on his paſt Behaviour with thankful Approbation, and look forwards with unmixed Joy to that important future Hour, when he ſhall appear before God, and humbly offer to him a whole Life ſpent in his Service!

* Eccluſ xxxix. 5.

SERMON II.

Preached in the Pariſh Church of St. *James*, *Weſtminſter*, *January* 30, 1733-4.

ISA. xxvi. 9.

—*When thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteouſneſs.*

THE gracious and wiſe Creator of this Univerſe continually *upholds it by the Word of his Power* *: and governs each Part of it ſuitably to its Nature. The Motions of the inanimate World proceed intirely from him. The Actions of intelligent Beings are indeed their own. But, as God foreſees from Eternity what every Agent, in every poſſible Situation, will do or intend; he muſt be able to influence, direct, and temper their Conduct, by many Ways that are conceivable, and doubtleſs by many more; ſo as not only to aſſiſt and protect Perſons in *doing what is lawful and right* †; but alſo to make even the worſt of Wretches, in the worſt of their Crimes, undeſigning Inſtruments of his righteous Purpoſes. And it being evidently as wor-

* Heb. i. 3. † Ezek. xviii. 27.

thy

thy of him, as it is eaſy for him, to act thus; the Reaſon of Mankind hath ever diſpoſed them to believe, what Revelation hath fully confirmed, that a *never failing Providence ordereth all Things, both in Heaven and Earth* *. Whatever befalls us therefore, proſperous or adverſe, being what our Maker judges and determines to be, on one Account or another, fit and proper; Events of both Sorts may juſtly be called *his Judgments*. But as, through the Wickedneſs of the World, he hath much oftener Occaſion to decree Puniſhments, than Rewards: this Name generally denotes the ſeverer Exerciſes of his Power; the Sufferings, that he inflicts on Men; or, in other Words, that they bring upon themſelves. For the ſtrong Connexion, which we experience, of our Follies and Sins with Diſtreſs and Miſery, is one Thing, that proceeds from the juſt Judgment of God; from that Order and Courſe of Things, which he hath eſtabliſhed.

Amidſt the vaſt Variety of providential Diſpenſations, ſome are, to human Faculties, unfathomable Depths. We can only ſee in them the awful Exertion of his Authority, who is Lord of all; and learn the important Leſſon, of humbling ourſelves before him, and ſubmitting meekly to his Will; in firm Expectation, that whatever may look diſorderly and wrong at preſent, will prove in due Time to be wiſeſt and beſt. Other Things there are,

* Collect for the Eighth Sunday after Trinity.

capable

capable of affording further Inſtruction: concerning which, however, it is eaſy for partiality, or Inattention, to make dangerous Miſtakes. For the ſame Events being often permitted to befall very different Perſons, for as different Ends; whoever will *judge according to the* firſt *Appearance*, will be far from *judging righteous Judgment* *.

But ſtill Multitudes of Occurrences remain, which convey ſuch obvious and clear Informations and Warnings, that Providence muſt intend we ſhould apply them to our own Benefit. For God doth not puniſh merely for the Sake of Puniſhment. Even his Severities are the Effects of Goodneſs: and always directed to the Advantage, either of thoſe who feel them, or at leaſt of others; *that they may hear and fear, and do no more Wickedneſs* †. Looking back on the Tranſactions of paſt Ages, without a moral Intention in doing it, is only gratifying an uſeleſs Curioſity; or acquiring Knowledge, full as likely to be ill uſed, as well. But it is a moſt ſerious and profitable Employment, humbly to trace the Footſteps of infinite Wiſdom, in the Government, as well as Creation, of the World; and think over the various Scenes, and wonderful Viciſſitudes, of mortal Affairs; in order to learn a true Senſe of our Condition here, and right Notions of behaving in it. *All Things*, that have ever happened to Men,

* John vii. 24. † Deut. xiii. 11.

have

have *happened to them for Enſamples: and they are written for our Admonition, upon whom the Ends of the World are come* *. And ſurely an awful Admonition it is, to have, as it were, the Hiſtory of our Species lying open before us; and the whole Experience of Man, ſince Man hath been, teaching and teſtifying to us, what a dreadful Train of Evils, perſonal, domeſtick, and national, every Tranſgreſſion of the Laws of Life is capable of drawing after it. Now as ſome of theſe Facts gradually ſink down into the Abyſs of Time, and diſappear; the Wickedneſs of every Generation is raiſing up others in their room; which, by the Advantage of their Nearneſs, we may obſerve more diſtinctly; and receive deeper Impreſſions from them, becauſe of the cloſer Relation, which they bear to us.

Amongſt theſe, the dreadful Deed of this Day, and the Calamities which preceded and followed it, ſet before our Eyes a moſt peculiarly inſtructive Example of divine Judgments, brought down by a ſinful People on their own Heads: concerning which, we may juſtly ſay, in the Words of the Prophet *Daniel:* that *under the whole Heaven hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jeruſalem* †. To go through the Detail of ſo laſting and complicated a Miſery, is no more poſſible, than it would be proper, in a Diſcourſe of this kind: the Buſineſs of which is, neither to diſpute

* 1 Cor. x. 11. † Dan. ix. 12.

upon

upon the doubtful Parts of the Hiſtory, nor to amuſe the Hearer with the Particulars of what is moſt undoubted: but to build religious and moral Concluſions on thoſe general Facts, which every one muſt admit, and will eaſily recollect, on this mournful Subject. We all know, the Tragedy began with the too juſt Occaſion, unhappily given on each Side, for Complaints and Fears. It proceeded, on the Side of the Diſaffected, to the unjuſtifiable Remedies, firſt of Sedition, then of open Rebellion; doubly unjuſtifiable, as the Grievances alledged were already redreſſed: and it concluded, after the many Diſtreſſes of a Civil War undergone for ſeveral Years, in the Murder of the King, and the total Ruin of the Conſtitution: to which, after trying in vain every way to ſave it, and making ſuch Conceſſions for that End, as the better and greater Part even of his Adverſaries voted to be ſufficient, he died at laſt a willing and a patient Martyr.

Theſe are the principal Points, from which we are now to draw proper Uſes. Paſſion and Prejudice may eaſily ſuggeſt very improper ones: and this Day become by ſuch Applications of Things as contending Parties are too apt to make, an Inſtrument of perpetuating thoſe Animoſities, againſt which it ought to caution us for ever. To cenſure with Bitterneſs the Perſons or the Proceedings on either Side now, when all that were concerned on both, are

gone

gone long ſince to anſwer for their Sins before God, is neither uſeful nor decent. And to aſcribe at random the ſame Diſpoſitions to any of the preſent Generation, is both uncharitable towards Them, and prejudicial to the Publick. What lies before us on the Occaſion, is only, from the Errors of our Anceſtors, to inſtruct and direct ourſelves. And we ſhall never ſee clearly, either what thoſe Errors were, or how we are are to guard againſt them, unleſs we conſider things with a mild, as well as ſerious, Temper of Mind. This will teach us, even where we differ, as Men muſt be allowed to differ, in judging what the Conduct of others was formerly, and how far it was right or wrong, to agree however in our Determination of the eſſential Queſtion, what our own Conduct ought to be now. Thus we ſhall be ſure to avoid all hurtful Concluſions, and take the right way to make a Variety of uſeful ones. For doubtleſs every Rank of Men amongſt us, both in Church and State, from the higheſt to the loweſt, may *learn* moſt important Leſſons of *Righteouſneſs*, from thoſe Failures of their Predeceſſors, and thoſe enſuing Miſeries, which we lament this Day. There was no one Party, or Order of Men, but did wrong: nor almoſt any one Thing, in which they ſinned, but they ſuffered a like Return for it. And it ſhould be our Buſineſs at preſent, whatever our Station is, Eccleſiaſtical or Civil, not only to recollect the Faults in others, of which thoſe, who went before us, complained;

but chiefly thoſe, into which they fell themſelves. For thus each Part of the Society, inſtead of ſuch mutual Imputations, as tend to make the whole uneaſy, would be led to ſuch a home Amendment, as tends to make it happy. But leaving, and recommending, to every Sort of Perſons, the Care of drawing Inferences, rightly ſuited to their own Caſes in particular; I ſhall only enlarge on the general Directions, which ſo dreadful a Time of Sin, and Suffering, may give to us all in common.

Now the great comprehenſive Leſſon, which God intends to teach by every Judgment, is an awful Regard to himſelf, as the moral Governor of the World; and a faithful Practice of true Religion. But here ſome will inſtantly object: were not the Miſchiefs of thoſe Days chiefly owing to Religion: many of the Diſputes merely of a religious Nature; and all of them embittered beyond Meaſure by a Mixture of religious Animoſities? How then is it recommended to us from hence? A little patient Attention will ſhew you. Real Religion, the Love of God our common Father, the love of Him whoſe peculiar Precept is *to love one another* *, can never produce Hatred and Contention upon Earth. It is the ſtrongeſt Bond, that can be, of Union and Peace; the ſtricteſt Reſtraint of every injurious Paſſion; the moſt powerful Incitement to every benevolent and merciful Deed. It is the only

* John xiii. 34. xv. 12, 17.

Foundation of Truſt and Security, amidſt all that can happen around us; and of Tranquillity and Joy within us. But Hypocriſy, Superſtition, and Enthuſiaſm, though extremely different from Religion, are often miſtaken for it: and theſe may work very fatal Effects under its Name: eſpecially when Pretences of extraordinary Piety and Purity, on one Side, are made peculiarly plauſible and popular, by the Prevalence of Immorality and Profaneneſs on the other; which Enormities, though far from univerſal, were too common, amongſt the Friends of the Royal Cauſe, notwithſtanding the excellent Example of the King; whom even his Enemies owned to be ſincerely pious, and ſtrictly virtuous. But then, if Religion may be counterfeited or perverted to bad Purpoſes; ſo may every good Thing in the World: Honour, Friendſhip, Loyalty, publick Spirit, Liberty itſelf. And Things of an indifferent Nature, and little Uſe, if often miſapplied, it is juſt and prudent to aboliſh. But Attempts againſt the Principles, that keep Society from Diſſolution, as far as they can be effectual, muſt be pernicious. And amongſt theſe Principles, God hath taken eſpecial Care, that the firſt and great Law of our Being, the Reverence due to himſelf, ſhall never be extirpated out of the World: and that every Effort to weaken it, ſhall be cloſe followed by Conſequences of private and publick Miſery; which will ſeverely prove, as indeed they have begun to do amongſt Us, that whatever Men, *wiſe in*

their own Conceit *, may think, *the Fear of the Lord, that is Wiſdom; and to depart from Evil, is Underſtanding* †.

The Thing then to be endeavoured is, not to leſſen, but increaſe the Regard to true Religion: only diſtinguiſhing it carefully from whatever elſe puts on its Name. Want of this Care produced great Errors and Evils, in the Days of which I am ſpeaking. There was, it muſt be owned, in the Friends and Governors of the Church, an over warm Zeal, and very blameable Stiffneſs and Severity. But there was alſo, in the Enemies of the Church, a moſt provoking Bitterneſs and Perverſeneſs: with a wild Eagerneſs for Innovations, founded on ignorant Prejudices, which their heated Fancies raiſed into neceſſary Truths: and then, looking on them as the Cauſe of Chriſt, they thought themſelves bound and commiſſioned to overturn whatever was contrary to them. The Enthuſiaſm of that Belief gave them a Spirit and a Vehemence in all they undertook; which common Men, acting on common Motives, could hardly be expected to withſtand. Their Succeſs, in its Turn, inflamed their Imaginations of being directed and aſſiſted from above: and they thought themſelves authoriſed by this higher Diſpenſation, to tread under Foot, without Scruple, the ordinary Rules of Right and Juſtice.

* Rom. xi. 25. xii. 16. † Job xxviii. 28.

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Let us always then beware of all such Mistakes, as then prevailed on either Side. Let us never be vehement either for or against Matters of Indifference: about Matters of Importance, let us be earnest with Mildness: and neither desire to see Authority exercised in Religion, to the Oppression of any ones Conscience; nor yet to see Liberty introduce Confusion. Let us coolly consider, of which Extreme we are most in Danger, and oppose that; whatever Shape or Name it assumes. The Name is but a Circumstance: the Thing to be dreaded is, the Principle, or the Practice, of advancing favourite Notions and Schemes, by Force or Fraud. The puritan Zealots were shockingly guilty of that Crime. The Church of *Rome* is, if possible, still more so: probably not a little concerned in bringing on us the Evils of this Day: certainly a determined Enemy, ever to be had in View, feared and guarded against. But then the effectual Method of guarding against Falsehood is not, by opposing to it a contrary Falsehood, as bad or worse; and setting up Licentiousness to encounter Bigotry. This, instead of curing, is multiplying Evils; which, opposite as they seem, will thrive together, and each assist the other's Growth. Nothing can secure us from false Religion, but true: nothing give Happiness, private or publick, but that serious Regard to God, which will place us under his fatherly Protection; and such rational Notions of the Doctrines and Precepts of his

holy Word, as will direct us into the Practice of all those Duties, which we owe to each other.

The second Lesson of Righteousness, which the Judgments of Heaven on our Forefathers plainly teach us, is paying due Obedience to legal Authority; and religiously abstaining from the smallest Instances of Disrespect to it; since we find, they have insensibly carried, even well-meaning and wise Men, into the utmost Lengths of wrong and imprudent Behaviour. All the Disorders, of which this Day reminds us, began with the lower Marks of Disaffection: immoderate Complaints, indecent Reflexions, ill-natured Interpretations, groundless Suspicions; first thoughtlessly, then designedly, spread abroad; till by degrees they took such Root, that nothing was too bad to be believed, nothing good enough to be approved. Discontent and Clamour soon ripened into Sedition and Tumult: after which, open Rebellion and general Confusion followed of course. Still it is by no means unlawful, either to represent Grievances, or to oppose ill Measures. On the contrary, doing these Things preserves a Government; neglecting them leads to its Ruin: and had the Means of doing them been freely and early allowed, and honestly used, in the Times we are now considering; probably none of the Mischiefs, that followed, had ever been known. But then, Representations must always be true, decent, needful, seasonable.

ſeaſonable. And Oppoſition ſhould never be made, but after impartial Conſideration, with evident Neceſſity, by peaceful and regular Methods, by prudent and cautious Steps; with proper Submiſſion to all that are ſet over us; and with the moſt ſacred Regard to the Sovereign Power: for if that be ſhaken, Experience hath ſhewn us, all is in Danger. Let us therefore only remember, that whatever was wicked and pernicious formerly, is of the ſame Nature ſtill: and it will prove an excellent Direction to our Conduct. From hence Perſons in lower Stations will learn, not to diſquiet themſelves and their Neighbours, to ill Purpoſe, with injudicious Vehemence concerning Things out of their Sphere; but leave thoſe to conduct them, whoſe Buſineſs it is; thinking charitably of them, and praying heartily for them. Thoſe of higher Degree will be induced, to proceed, in what lies before them, with Temper and Conſiderateneſs, with Equity and Candor; with Care, neither to provoke Reſentment, nor excite Jealouſy. And we ſhall all, of every Rank, be inſtructed, to acknowledge thankfully the many Bleſſings that we enjoy, beyond what our miſerable Anceſtors did a Century ago: and not only to bear with Chearfulneſs the neceſſary, though heavy, Burthens, that have been laid on us, for the Safety of all, which can juſtly be dear to us; but ſubmit with Patience to whatever, we may any of us apprehend, we ſuffer more than we need: ſeriouſly reflecting,

what fatal Effects may ariſe from a different Spirit. For in the Times before us, when there were confeſſedly many Grievances, and ſome of them great ones; yet how inconſiderable were they, when compared with the Bloodſhed and Devaſtation, the Oppreſſion and Confuſion, the total Deſtruction of Church and State, which unwiſe and undutiful Attempts for Redreſs at length produced! Let not Us therefore *murmur, as ſome of them murmured, and were deſtroyed of the Deſtroyer* *.

A third Leſſon, which this Day affords us, is, not to be fond of Innovations, either in Civil Matters, or Eccleſiaſtical. It is a common Weakneſs of Mankind, to overlook the Advantages of their Condition, and dwell only on its Inconveniencies and Defects, real or imagined; till, though a very tolerable, or perhaps, on the whole, a very good one; it appears to them worſe, than any other, into which they can fall. Even the more indolent therefore, inſtead of diſcountenancing, look favourably on Propoſals for Change. And the more enterprizing ruſh on with Eagerneſs to unhinge and overſet; never once reflecting, whether the Project be not either impoſſible to be accompliſhed, or not worth the Pains; injurious to others, or likely to prove pernicious to themſelves: never ſeriouſly conſidering, what they have to ſubſti-

* 1 Cor. x. 10.

tute;

tute; whether it can take place, and laſt; whether it will be, on the whole, for the better or the worſe. Thus were too many of our Predeceſſors in this Nation diſpoſed: extremely miſerable under a Conſtitution of Government, which they found too late inſeparable from their Happineſs: and ſo earneſt to reform every Part of it, that they ruined the Whole. The Projects for eſtabliſhing perfect Liberty in the State, ended, as too much Liberty always will, in abſolute Tyranny: ſucceſſive Tyrannies, of various Shapes, and Names unheard of, diſpoſſeſſing each other; haraſſing the Nation with continual Uncertainties and Alarms; exhauſting it with daily Executions and Impoſitions. The Schemes for reſtoring an imaginary Purity in the Church, unexpectedly ran to ſuch Lengths, as deſtroyed the whole Frame of it, and involved the Crown in its Fall. No other Form of Religion could be ſet up, inſtead of that which was aboliſhed. Mens Minds were held in continual Agitation, by the wild Zeal of contending Sects: teaching Doctrines; ſome, blaſphemous againſt God; ſome, ſubverſive of all Order amongſt Men; ſome, contrary to all Care of Virtue and good Life: and every Thing was tolerated, but what had a Right to be eſtabliſhed. How theſe Things would have ended: whether in a total Contempt of Religion, and moral Obligations too; or whether, after that was found inſupportable, as it ſoon muſt, the *Romiſh* Superſtition, ever vigilant

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and active, would have overſpread the Nation, wearied out with Diviſions, and glad to embrace any Thing, that promiſed Unity: this God hath mercifully hid from our Knowledge, by bleſſing us, in the Extremity of ſuch Miſery, with its only Cure, the Reſtoration of our ancient Conſtitution. Let us eſteem it then as we ought, and be zealous to preſerve it: improve it, if we can really and ſafely: but not be forward to practiſe upon it without Neceſſity, or ſome very valuable End. Hoping for Perfection in any thing human, is viſionary; murmuring for want of it is reſolving never to be happy; and taking irregular Methods to obtain it, is the ſure way to be wretched. Some Alterations indeed, from Time to Time, the Reaſon of Things and the Changes of Circumſtances may require. But that no wanton or doubtful, much leſs dangerous Trials, ought to be made, the fatal Experience of this Day fully ſhews.

And a fourth Direction, which it gives as plainly, is, to beware of the Spirit of Party. Nothing, but that, could have blinded and embittered People ſo, as to make them deſtroy themſelves and the Publick, without ſeeing or feeling it. Few, if any, at firſt, had the leaſt Intention of what they afterwards did: very probably, had it been foretold them, they would have abhorred the Thought. But Perſons cannot even gueſs, when they give themſelves up to this Kind of Zeal, how ſtrong

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it may grow within them; or how they may be entangled, and carried on, againſt their Wills. *The Beginning of Strife is as when one letteth out Water:* nobody can ſay, how far it may overflow, or how hard it may be to get it back into its Channel, and repair the Breach. *Therefore leave off Contention, before it be meddled with* *, and by mutual Provocation worked up into a Rage. When Party Reſentments and Conteſts run high, the general Good is no longer in View: both Sides attend wholly to the Advancement of their own Power; depreſſing their Adverſaries; forcing them into Meaſures, hurtful to the Publick; the worſe, the better; and no way is left untried to ruin one another, till the Ruin of the whole is too probable a Conſequence. But above all, in Countries bleſt with Freedom, amidſt numberleſs Advantages, there is one peculiar Danger; that the high Spirit which it gives Men, and the full Opportunities which they have to exert that Spirit, may produce Diſſenſions utterly deſtructive, not only of Peace and Comfort, but, in the End, of Freedom itſelf. Let us therefore always remember St. *Paul*'s Caution, *If ye bite and devour one another, take Heed that ye be not conſumed one of another* †; and behave ſuitably to St. *Peter*'s Rule, *as free, yet not uſing our Liberty for a Cloak of Maliciouſneſs, but as the Servants of God* ‡.

* Prov. xvii. 14. † Gal. v. 15. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 16.

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Theſe then are the Inſtructions, which the dreadful Judgment, this Day commemorated, affords us: to *fear God, honour the King, and not meddle with them that are given to change* *; but *lead quiet and peaceable Lives, in all Godlineſs and Honeſty* †. The Tranſgreſſion of theſe Duties, was, by the natural Conſequences of Things, and the juſt Permiſſion of Heaven, the Cauſe, on the Peoples Part, of thoſe terrible Calamities, under which our Anceſtors groaned ſo long; and were made to *learn Righteouſneſs*, not as we, by the Experience of others, but by heavy Sufferings of their own. To theſe, however, God in his good Time graciouſly put an End: and re-eſtabliſhing our ancient Form of Government, hath, by a wonderful Succeſſion of kind Providences, preſerved it, through innumerable Dangers, from abroad and at home, to this Day. Nor perhaps, with all the Faults of the preſent Age, which God knows are neither few nor ſmall ones, would it be eaſy for us to fix on almoſt any other Time or Country, in which we could, with Reaſon, rather have made it our Choice to live. Let us therefore join Gratitude for his Mercies with Fear of his Judgments; and be moved by both, to Piety and Virtue, publick and private. He hath given us great and frequent Proofs of his Readineſs to ſave and protect us; together with ſome few, moſt deſerved Inſtances, of Diſpleaſure and Puniſhment: thus

* Prov. xxiv. 21. † 1 Tim. ii. 2.

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placing before our Eyes, and leaving to our Choice, the Happineſs of a religious, loyal and moral People, or the Miſeries of a profane, rebellious, and wicked one. *Now therefore,* to conclude in the Words of the Prophet *Samuel, If ye will fear the Lord, and ſerve him, and obey his Voice; then ſhall both ye, and the King that reigneth over you, continue, following the Lord your God. But if ye will not obey the Voice of the Lord, but rebel againſt his Commandment; then ſhall the Hand of the Lord be againſt you, as it was againſt your Fathers* *.

* 1 Sam. xii. 13, 14, 15.

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SERMON III.

Preached in the Pariſh Church of St. *James*, *Weſtminſter*, *November* 27, 1737, being the *Sunday* after the Death of her Majeſty the late Queen *Caroline*.

ECCLES. VII. 4.

The Heart of the Wiſe is in the Houſe of Mourning.

THE Providence of God is one great Inſtrument, which he uſes for our Inſtruction: and every Diſpenſation of it is fitted to convey very uſeful Admonitions to Perſons of attentive Minds. But the mournful Events of Things have a peculiar Force to excite Recollection and ſerious Thought: to place our Condition here, in a juſt and ſtrong Light before our Eyes; to awaken Sentiments within us, of Piety and Reſignation, Humanity and Compaſſion; and prompt us to make theſe the Rule of our Conduct. So long as nothing alarms us, we grow too commonly negligent and inconſiderate; forget our Dangers, forget our Mercies; give up our Hearts to every Paſſion that ſeizes on them; and thus are often

ten led to do great Harm, both to others and ourſelves. But *when the Judgments of God are in the Earth, then the Inhabitants of the World learn Righteouſneſs* *. When *the Voice of the Lord crieth unto the City, Hear ye the Rod, and who hath appointed it* †: then *the Ears of them, that hear, ſhall hearken; the Heart alſo of the Raſh ſhall underſtand Knowledge* ‡. But of all the Strokes of God's Hand, that which carries the greateſt Awe with it, is Death; *the Sentence of the Lord over all Fleſh* ‖. The Sight or the Thought of that important Change, from the Conſtitution of our Nature, makes very ſtrong Impreſſions upon us: and the longer we revolve the Subject in our Minds, the more Reaſon we find to be deeply affected by it, and act with a continual View to it. Nothing therefore would influence us more effectually to *apply our Hearts unto Wiſdom* §; if it were not for this one Circumſtance, that being ſurrounded with daily Inſtances of Mortality, they are familiarized to us in ſuch a Manner by their Frequency, that though in Reaſon they ought to have the greater Effect upon us for their Number, yet in Fact they have uſually little or none; unleſs there be ſomething, either in their Nearneſs to us, or their publick Importance, to diſtinguiſh them from common Caſes, and engage a more intereſting Attention to them. We ſhould therefore be very careful

* Iſa. xxvi. 9. † Mic. vi. 9. ‡ Iſa. xxxii. 3, 4.
‖ Eccluſ xli. 3. § Pſ. xc. 12.

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never to miſs the Opportunity of improving ourſelves within, by due Reflexions on ſuch Deaths, as our own particular Concern in them, or the general one, makes conſiderable: but, how great ſoever our Loſs be otherwiſe, reſolve to gain this Advantage notwithſtanding, that *by the Sadneſs of the Countenance our Heart ſhall become better* *.

For ſo valuable a Purpoſe, it is well worth while to bear with all the Gloomineſs of *the Houſe of Mourning*; to place ourſelves voluntarily in it, a while, and return thither from Time to Time; deliver ourſelves up to ſuch Meditations, as we find it fitted to inſpire; and dwell upon them ſomewhat longer, than the firſt unavoidable Impreſſions oblige us. For moſt uſeful Leſſons will *the Heart of the Wiſe* be able to learn there; and excellent Rules of Conduct, with reſpect to himſelf, to the Memory of thoſe who are deceaſed, and to ſuch as they have left behind them.

I. With reſpect to himſelf. *Death is the End of all Men, and the Living will lay it to his Heart* †. It is becauſe we do not *lay it to our Hearts*, that we moſt of us go on juſt as if we imagined there was to be no End at all: and though we do not indeed ſpeculatively think ſo, yet we live and act upon that Suppoſition: and our knowing it to be a falſe one hath no Manner of Influence, for want of re-

* Eccles vii. 3. † Eccleſ. vii. 2.

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flecting upon it as ſuch. Hence we indulge our Souls in vehement Deſires, and fill our Days with endleſs Projects: every Point gained, opening an Inlet for more to be aimed at; every Failure, redoubling our Earneſtneſs to recover our loſt Ground: and we never recollect, how Life is waſting under us all the while. Even to the Departure of others before our Eyes we attend, only as an Opportunity of framing and following new Schemes: and thus the Death of our Fellow-creatures proves an Occaſion of our forgetting the more entirely, that we ſhall ever die ourſelves. This could not be, would we but ſtop a little at *the Houſe of Mourning*; and make the moſt obvious of all Reflexions there, from contemplating the End of others, how very quickly our own End may come, and how ſoon it muſt. Such Thoughts will enliven our Diligence in performing our Duty here: in *working, while it is Day, the Works of him, that ſent us* *. For how ſuddenly ſoever the Night may overtake us thus employed; *bleſſed is that Servant whom his Lord, when he comes, ſhall find ſo doing* †. But the ſame Sort of Meditations muſt ſurely moderate, beyond all Things, our Warmth in every other Purſuit: and diſpoſe us, inſtead of plunging inconſiderately forwards, till in the Midſt of our Buſtle we drop unexpectedly into the Grave; rather to ſecure the preſent Time, for recollecting, before we go out of

* John ix. 4. † Matth. xxiv. 46.

the World, what our Behaviour hath been hitherto in it: that ſo we may endeavour to correct our Miſtakes, ſupply our Omiſſions, perfect our Faith and Repentance; and through God's Grace, which alone can enable us, form ourſelves into ſuch a Temper of Mind, *that we may be found of Him in Peace, without Spot and blameleſs* *.

And as the Thoughts of Death are excellently fitted to compoſe the Vehemence of our other Paſſions, ſo they are fitted particularly to check that very ſinful Kind of Vehemence, which we are exceedingly prone to expreſs, one againſt another. Whoever will but conſider of how ſhort a Duration our Exiſtence here is, and with how great a Number of unavoidable Sufferings it is filled, will be thoroughly convinced, that there is no manner of Need for us to load the *few and evil Days* † of our Fellow-creatures with additional Uneaſineſſes, but great Occaſion to give one another all the Comfort we can; and live as friendly as poſſible, whilſt we ſtay together, with thoſe from whom we are to part ſo ſoon, and appear before the Father of all; who will treat us, as we have treated our Brethren.

Another Inſtruction, which *the Heart of the Wiſe* will learn *in the Houſe of Mourning*, is, never to flatter himſelf with Expectations of any laſting Good in a State ſo uncertain as

* 2 Pet. iii. 14. † Gen. xlvii. 9.

this.

this. For let the Proſpect appear as fair as it will; yet beſides a Multitude of other Things to deſtroy it, every ſingle Inſtance of Death reminds us, that our own Lives may fail; that their Lives, in whom our Happineſs is placed, or on whom our Hopes depend, may fail: and even thoſe, who ſeem to ſtand at a great Diſtance from us, may overturn, by their Fall, the whole Edifice, which our forward Imagination had erected. Undoubtedly the Dreams, which Men indulge, of enjoying more in the World than it hath to beſtow on them, are mighty pleaſing ones for a while. But from the firſt they do us Harm: they give us a different Turn of Mind, from what our Maker intended we ſhould have: and when a Diſappointment comes; then laſting Wretchedneſs immediately ſucceeds our ſhort-lived Felicity. For, whether we continue in a State of Dejection; or whether we repeat the ſame Folly; expect again, and are again deceived; either way we are miſerable. Or could we eſcape with ever ſo little Uneaſineſs, or enjoy in this Manner ever ſo much Pleaſure here; yet ſetting our Hearts on that, as our Portion, and ſeeking our Happineſs where God hath not placed it, can never end well for us. And therefore we ſhould contemplate with Care every Diſpenſation of Providence, that may warn us againſt ſo fatal a Miſtake; and hearken diligently to that Voice, with which God hath appointed that every Thing on Earth ſhall cry aloud to us: *Ariſe ye, and*

depart: for this is not your Reſt *. So far from it indeed, ſo abſolutely incapable is the preſent World of giving us any Security for any one Enjoyment: that the higheſt and the loweſt Perſons in it are quite upon a Level in this Reſpect; equally unable to promiſe the leaſt Thing with Certainty, either to themſelves or to others. Whatever is human, is alike precarious; and our only ſure Dependence is on the Power that made us. *Put not your Truſt in Princes, nor in any Child of Man: for there is no Help in them. Their Breath goeth forth; they return to their Earth: in that very Day their Thoughts periſh. Bleſſed is he, that hath the God of Jacob for his Help; whoſe Hope is in the Lord his God: which made Heaven and Earth, the Sea and all that is therein; which keepeth Truth for ever* †. A World, like this, cannot be the Seat of Happineſs. Yet our gracious Creator and Father certainly deſigned us to be happy. And therefore, the leſs Proviſion he hath made for it here, the ſurer we may be, that a better State remains in reſerve. It is true, indeed, we are all Sinners: and from our own Deſerts could have little Ground of Comfort in looking beyond the Grave. But we have it abundantly from the Aſſurance of Forgiveneſs, on moſt equitable Terms, in Jeſus Chriſt; *who hath brought Life and Immortality to Light* ‡, and *delivered them who through Fear of Death*

* Mic. ii. 10. † Pſ. clxvi. 3—6. ‡ 2 Tim. i. 10.

were

were all their Life-time ſubject to Bondage *. Here then it is, that the Uncertainty of Life, and every Thing in it, directs us to fix: on the firm Foundation of Faith in the Goſpel of our bleſſed Redeemer. Secured, by Him, of future Bliſs, in proportion to the preſent Afflictions, which we bear as we ought, we ſhall paſs through them all, not only with compoſed, but chearful Reſignation: the more ſteadfaſtly we look on the dark Side of Objects, the clearer Light will ariſe to us out of them; and the trueſt Conſolation from *the Houſe of Mourning*.

You ſee therefore, what Improvement *the Heart of the Wiſe* may receive from a general Conſideration of *the End of all Men*. But the further View, of the different Ends of different Men, is a Subject of yet further Advantage. *The Wicked is driven away in his Wickedneſs: but the Righteous hath Hope in his Death* †. The former of theſe Reflexions is indeed a very dreadful, but a very inſtructive one. For whether we ſet before our Eyes the dying Terrors of an ill Perſon, whoſe Conſcience is awakened too late; or the fatal Inſenſibility of one *hardened through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin* ‡, and going to *lie down in Sorrow* ||, without the leaſt Apprehenſion of it: no Admonition can be either ſtronger or more important, than that which both theſe Caſes

* Heb. ii. 15. † Prov. xiv. 32. ‡ Heb. iii. 13. || Iſa. l. 11.

naturally convey. But the Death of the Righteous gives Inſtruction unattended with Horror: and the Serioufneſs, which it inſpires, is pleaſing and peaceful. In one Way indeed of conſidering Things, the Departure of good and virtuous Perſons from amongſt Men is Matter of moſt melancholy Reflexion. Their Number is very ſmall: and their Uſe is very great. They *are the Salt of the Earth* *, that preſerve Society from utter Corruption and Diſſolution. And though the Generality of the World hath little Regard to this; and is much more apt to depreciate the Merit of ſuch, than to think of the Good they do, or the Evils they prevent; yet the Example and Influence of but a few of them, diſtributed amongſt the reſt of Mankind, is a Thing of much Benefit: and when any of them are qualified with eminent Abilities, and placed by Providence in Stations of Importance; there are Times, when their Life may be a Bleſſing of incredible Extent; and their Death prove the Means of opening a Breach, for unknown Miſchiefs to ruſh in. *Help, Lord: for the godly Man ceaſeth: for the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men* †. *The Righteous periſheth, and no Man layeth it to Heart: and the Merciful are taken away; none conſidering, that the Righteous is taken away from the Evil to come* ‡. Such Reflexions, as theſe, it may perhaps appear Wiſdom rather to drive from us, than invite them to diſquiet us. But it is

* Matth. v. 13. † Pſ. xii. 1. ‡ Iſa. lvii. 1.

always

always wiſe to think of whatever it is poſſible to prevent: and a Reformation of national Sins is the plain Method to prevent the coming of national Calamities: as the Reformation of ourſelves is, to prevent our being upon the whole the worſe for them, if they ſhould come. Whatever human Supports may at any Time fail, God will always ſupport that People, who place a virtuous Truſt in Him. Or though a Nation were growing, in Appearance, incorrigibly bad; yet they, who are careful to preſerve themſelves from the ſpreading Infection, particularly by prudent Meditations on the threatening Removal of valuable Perſons, may poſſibly be thus excited to ſuch Uſefulneſs, as will defer, if not hinder, its Ruin: at leaſt they take the Way to *deliver their own Souls* *, undoubtedly from the Puniſhments of another Life, and perhaps alſo, wholly or in part, from Sufferings in this. *The Days of Man are like a Shadow, that declineth: and he withereth like the Graſs. But the Lord is the ſame: and his Years ſhall have no End. The Children of his Servants ſhall continue: and their Seed ſhall ſtand faſt in his Sight* †.

Be the Loſs therefore otherwiſe as great as it will, which befalls, at any Time, either the Publick in general, or ourſelves in particular, when the Hand of God ſnatches away the Worthy and the Eminent; yet thinking

* Ezek. xiv. 14. † Pſ. cii. 11, 27, 28.

ſeriouſly and rightly upon it, we may certainly extract more than a little Good from it. And whoever is taught effectually, by ſuch an Occurrence, to *ceaſe from Man whoſe Breath is in his Noſtrils* *, and place his Expectations and Hopes in the ever living God; far from being overwhelmed by the melancholy Part of the Event, will be able, with a very conſiderable Degree of Compoſedneſs to contemplate and improve by the enlivening and comforting Parts.

Amongſt others, it ſurely is one very great Comfort, to ſee or to hear of that diſtinguiſhing Tranquillity, with which religious Perſons meet their approaching Diſſolution, *Mark the perfect Man, and behold the Upright: for the End of that Man is Peace* †. Sometimes indeed Fears and Doubts, ariſing from the Influence of a diſordered Body, cloud the Mind of the Righteous at their Death, and obſcure their ſetting Sun. Nor is it uſeleſs to take Notice even of theſe Caſes, for our future Satisfaction, if ever the like ſhould be our own, that our Covenant-Right to God's Favour may be very well grounded, notwithſtanding for the preſent we are quite incapable of ſeeing and *rejoicing in the Light of his Countenance* ‡. But when the pious Soul enjoys in that Hour its genuine Serenity, then is the Beauty of Holineſs beheld in the ſtrongeſt Point of View. Then we have a noble Opportunity of diſcerning what Religion is, and what it can do; when we obſerve the Man-

* Iſa. ii. 22. † Pſ. xxxvii. 37. ‡ Pſ. lxxxix. 16.

ner, in which it enables thoſe, who are ſupported by it, to poſſeſs themſelves in the Face of Death. When we ſee them, in the Strength of it, joining the tendereſt Affections to thoſe whom they leave behind, with the quieteſt Submiſſion to part with them; and the moſt virtuous Reaſons for wiſhing to ſtay longer here, with the moſt dutiful Obedience to Him who calls them away: when we ſee them calmly diveſting themſelves of their deareſt Attachments to Life; and only ſollicitous to provide, by ſerious Advice and kind Recommendations, for the Happineſs of thoſe who ſurvive them: in the Midſt of the acuteſt Pains *waiting* with the mildeſt Patience *all the Days of their appointed Time* *; and preſerving a greater Senſibility of every ones Sufferings, than their own: ſhewing themſelves now, what they always were; but riſing in their Virtues proportionably to their Trial, and teſtifying that *their Faith is the Victory that overcometh the World* †; ſuch Occaſions, as God knows they had need bring ſome Advantage with them, furniſh us with uncommon Means of learning in the Chambers of Death, what are the true Principles for the Conduct of Life. But,

II. The *Heart of the Wiſe*, whilſt it dwells *in the Houſe of Mourning*, will not only improve itſelf in a general Senſe of Chriſtian Piety, but alſo more eſpecially, in ſuch Pre-

* Job xiv. 14. † 1 John v. 4.

cepts

cepts of it, as conſtitute a proper Behaviour with reſpect to the Memory of thoſe, whoſe Departure is at any Time the Object of our Thoughts. The Dead indeed are out of our Reach: our Goodneſs extends not to them, and our Enmity can do them no Harm. But for the ſake of common Juſtice and Humanity we are bound to the amiable Duties, of ſhewing Candor in Regard to their Failings; and paying the Honour, which is due to their Merit.

That we ſhould ſpeak and think with Mildneſs, concerning ſuch as partake of our own Nature; and are in nothing more like us, than in the Frailties to which they may be liable; this is what all Men, at all Times, have a Right to claim from us. But they who *have finiſhed their Courſe* *, and *whoſe Dwelling is no* longer *with Fleſh* †; They ſeem to have a peculiar Exemption from thoſe Severities of Cenſure, which amongſt the Living are ſo much too liberally diſtributed and returned. Not that good and bad Characters are to be confounded after Death, any more than before it: or *the Wicked to be as the Righteous* ‡ in that Reſpect, or any other. But yet, not even the Crimes of ſuch, as have been worſe Offenders than ordinary, ſhould be related with Aggravation and Inſult; or indeed be mentioned at all, more than the In-

* Acts xx. 24. 2 Tim. iv. 7. † Dan. ii. 12.
‡ Gen. xviii. 25.

tereſt

tereſts of Virtue and Mankind require. Much leſs are we at Liberty to trample on the Aſhes of Perſons, on the whole religious and virtuous: or receive Accuſations againſt them, of which very poſſibly a great Part may chiefly, or intirely, proceed from Invention or Miſtake; from Ignorance of Facts, or Inattention to Circumſtances, or Weakneſs of Judgment. Nay indeed we ought not to dwell upon the Failings, with which we have the beſt Reaſon to apprehend they were chargeable, ſo as to give theſe for their Character; but caſt a Veil over their Imperfections, in Reverence to their eſtimable Qualities. Towards the Living this is our Duty: but if we fail of it towards the Dead, nothing can excuſe us. The Thought of that awful Change, which they have undergone, might alone be ſufficient to calm every Emotion and Prejudice, that we may formerly have felt againſt them. But beſides, all the Provocations, that we can have received from them, are now at an End. In whatever they have interfered with us; they will do ſo no more. Whatever we have thought blameable in them; the Cognizance, whether it be or not, is removed to a higher Tribunal. They are gone to anſwer for Their Deeds: we ſhall very ſhortly follow to anſwer for Ours: let us judge one another with that Mercy, with which may our Lord and Maſter judge us all. And let us remember too, that in a worldly Way of conſidering Things, this is the diſcreet Method. *Rejoice not over thy greateſt*

greateſt Enemy, when dead: but remember, that we die all *. Soon will the Time come, when our Names alſo ſhall lie expoſed to ſuch Uſage as the Survivors may think fit to give them. And therefore the Conſideration of what is *the End of all Men*, ſhould make us much too prudent, ever to ſet an Example of poſthumous Rancour: and incline us, by treating the Memories of others with generous Tenderneſs, to ſecure the ſame Treatment to our own hereafter.

The next Duty, of which Mortality ſhould remind us, towards the Deceaſed, is paying juſt Honour to their Virtues. Honour is a Debt, owing indeed to worthy Characters in This World: but ſeldom well paid, till after they are gone out of it. As ſoon as it is too late, we begin to perceive, that they deſerved to have been much more highly valued, than they were. And we ſhould all of us learn from hence, to eſteem thoſe for the future, whilſt they are alive, whom we ſhall eſteem, when they are dead. But at leaſt, when they have completed the Part aſſigned them here, and performed the principal Scenes of it well: then it becomes high Time, that thoſe Applauſes ſhould be given them, which were their Due before; and their Memory be put in Poſſeſſion of whatever they ought to have perſonally enjoyed. Flattering the Dead will do neither Them, nor indeed their Re-

* Eccles viii. 7.

putation,

putation, any Service: or if it could, would do, at the ſame Time, much Harm to Mankind; by taking away Diſtinction, where it ought to be preſerved. But as the Deſire of leaving behind us an honourable Reputation, when we have earned it, is naturally a ſtrong Principle in virtuous Breaſts; and a very uſeful one to human Society: it ſhould be carefully cheriſhed, by allowing to every Degree of real Deſert its proper Acknowledgment; and uſing the only Means, that we have, of making thoſe yet live, who in every other Reſpect are dead to us. The true Immortality, God beſtows on his faithful Servants, and them alone, in another World: but we ſhould give in this all that we are able, the poor Shadow of it, an honeſt Fame, to as many as are intitled to it, in their reſpective Shares. Whoever hath gone through Life with only a benevolent Heart and upright Intention, though it be in a private Rank, hath Merit conſiderable enough not to be ſoon forgotten. And in proportion as other Things concur to raiſe the Character of Men, they ſhould be reſpected both more and longer. Whenever therefore the Virtues of any Perſons have been adorned by Nature with uncommon Accompliſhments, and by themſelves with valuable Acquiſitions: when they have been called out by Providence into the View of Mankind; have reſiſted the greateſt Temptations; appeared equal without Effort to the

the greateſt Difficulties; filled with diffuſive Beneficence the largeſt Sphere of publick Life, and yet paid the moſt accurate and amiable Regard to the various Duties of private Relations: when they have ſpent their Days in this Manner, and finiſhed them in the Manner deſcribed before; then the prudent in Heart will regret their Loſs with the deepeſt Concern, and *have them in everlaſting Remembrance**. But

III. We may learn, from a conſiderate Meditation on the Examples of Mortality, very uſeful Inſtructions for our Behaviour, not only with reſpect to the Deceaſed; but thoſe whom they have left behind, any way peculiarly related to them.

The Death of a wife and good, of a near and affectionate Friend, is unſpeakably the greateſt of all Calamities. One ſingle Stroke of this Kind may deſtroy almoſt the whole Comfort of our Lives at once: and a very few of them leave us in the moſt dreadful of Solitudes: deſtitute of any one to intruſt with full Confidence, amidſt Numbers to ſuſpect and fear; deſtitute of Help againſt our own Frailties and Infirmities; and vaſtly more miſerable for having been happy. Whoever is capable of theſe Reflexions, if he allows himſelf Time to make them, will ſincerely pity all that have

* Pſal. cxii. 6.

ſuffered

ſuffered ſuch a Loſs; and equally eſteem all that ſhew they are ſenſible of it. Right Affections are the very Foundation of a right Character: and Affection continued to be expreſſed, in the Manner it ought, for Friends and Relations at and after their Deaths, carries in it an evident Mark, both of Sincerity and Strength. When, inſtead of withdrawing from the mournful Scene, Perſons fix their Hearts intirely upon it; fulfil to the very utmoſt the whole *Labour of Love* *, to which Providence then calls them; and, after all proves fruitleſs, transfer their Concern in a proper Degree to the Support of their Partners in Sorrow; each evidencing their Conſciouſneſs of the others Worth, by a mutual Tenderneſs that goes through them all: the Knowledge of this Behaviour, in any Station of Life, muſt needs fill our Minds with great Honour and Regard for ſuch as feel Affliction in ſo exemplary a Manner; and diſpoſe us effectually to avoid whatever may increaſe their Sufferings, and do whatever may alleviate them. But eſpecially thoſe, whom we are bound to reverence at all Times, we ſhould reverence doubly in their Diſtreſs: and thoſe, for whom at all Times we are bound to pray, we ſhould then with uncommon Earneſtneſs recommend to *the God of all Comfort* †. Let us therefore accordingly at preſent beſeech Him, that he would be merciful to that Houſe,

* Heb. vi. 10. † 2 Cor. i. 3.

which

which is now peculiarly *the Houſe of Mourning:* that he would be merciful to theſe Nations, which have the juſteſt Cauſe to ſhare in all their Griefs: that he would *turn from us thoſe Evils, that we moſt righteouſly have deſerved;* and continue to us thoſe Bleſſings, which through his infinite Goodneſs we enjoy. Grant theſe our Petitions, gracious God, for the Sake of thy ever bleſſed Son, Jeſus Chriſt our Lord. *Amen.*

SER-

SERMON IV.

Preached in the Pariſh Church of St. *Bridget*, *London*, before the Right Honourable the Lord-Mayor, *&c.* on *Monday* in *Eaſter Week*, 1738.

1 PET. IV. 10.

As every Man hath received the Gift, even ſo miniſter the ſame one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold Grace of God.

THE Inducements, that we have, to relieve the Miſeries, and promote the Happineſs of our Fellow-creatures, are, God be thanked, both many in Number, and of various Kinds. Our Hearts naturally incline us to it: our Reaſon approves of it as right. The more we cultivate kind Diſpoſitions, the truer Peace we poſſeſs within; and the greater Capacity of ſocial Happineſs, the ſweeteſt Part of the Enjoyment of Life. Willingneſs to do Good, is always rewarded with the Eſteem of Mankind; and Selfiſhneſs of Temper, the conſtant Object of every one's Averſion. We have frequent Experience in ourſelves, what Suffering is: and are therefore

 inexcuſable,

inexcuſable, if we overlook it in others. We live in a World, where, if it were not for the Exerciſe of Mercy and Pity, the Face of Things would look dreadful with miſerable Objects; and the Multitudes of Perſons, driven to Deſpair, make Society unſafe. Beſides, we know the Viciſſitudes of human Affairs: and are nearly concerned, to encourage by our Example that Spirit of Goodneſs and Compaſſion; of which We or Ours may, on one Occaſion or another, eaſily come to have great need.

Theſe are powerful Motives to Beneficence: and yet the Influence of them is too commonly exceeding ſmall. The Hearts of ſome Perſons have but little Senſibility; and thoſe of others, a very confined and partial one. Some content themſelves with talking of Benevolence, inſtead of cultivating it; or with the inward Feeling of good Affections, inſtead of exerting them: and others give Scope to their wrong Inclinations, and their right ones, promiſcuouſly; and ſo eaſily do more Harm in the World, than Good. To ſpeculative Reaſonings but few Perſons attend: and fewer ſtill are governed by them in Practice. Their Liableneſs to the common Accidents of Life, Men either forget amidſt the Pleaſures of it, or turn into an Argument for attending the more cloſely to their own Intereſts. As for Reputation; a few Acts of Goodneſs, well managed, will obtain as much of it as they are con-

concerned about. Or, if they cannot be eſteemed; they may hope at leaſt to be courted. And even if they fail of this; they can affect to deſpiſe it, and appear, notwithſtanding, happy; ſome in their Wealth, ſome in their Voluptuouſneſs.

Our wiſe and good Maker hath therefore not left us to the Influence of theſe Motives only: but, as he ſaw it neceſſary, that in all our Ways we ſhould be directed by Regard to Him; ſo he hath added infinite Force to the above-mentioned Conſiderations, by giving us the Knowledge of Himſelf, and teaching us to look on them as Evidences of his Will. He undoubtedly deſigned the good Things of this World, not for the Gratification of a few of his Creatures; but for the Benefit of all. And he hath divided them unequally amongſt us; not that one Part of the human Race ſhould ſink under Miſery and Want, and the other look down with Contempt upon them: but that Pity and Gratitude ſhould be mutually exerciſed, and the Pleaſure of doing and Receiving Good, felt among Men: that the Poor ſhould be ſerviceable to the Rich; they, in return, kind to the Poor; and Both united in the Bonds of mutual Good-will, from a Senſe of their mutual Dependency. Theſe, it appears, from the Knowledge that we have of his Nature, muſt have been his Intentions. The ſame Thing appears further from the Nature he hath given Us, and the Circumſtances,

in which he hath placed us. But that no Sort of Evidence of it might be wanting, he hath made known to the World his Pleaſure by expreſs Revelation alſo: requiring of us all *to do Good, and to communicate* *, both as we are Servants, bound in every thing to obey him; and as we are Stewards, appointed and intruſted by him for this very Purpoſe.

Let us therefore conſider, with due Seriouſneſs,

I. What general Influence it ſhould have upon us, that we are *Stewards of the manifold Grace of God.*

II. What Influence in particular with reſpect to thoſe Methods of Charity, which are the Occaſion of our preſent Meeting.

I. Let us conſider the general Influence. Every Thing, which God hath done for the Good of his Creatures, is *Grace* or Favour to them: and every Thing, which he has placed in our Hands for their Good, is Grace of which we are Stewards. All the Means and Opportunities we have, of making the World, or any Part of it, better or happier; by our Knowledge or Wealth, by our Power or Intereſt, our Care or Pains, our friendly Behaviour or good Example; are given us in Truſt, to be ſo exerciſed. How *manifold* theſe are,

* Heb. xiii. 16.

upon

upon the Whole, it is not perhaps eaſy for us to be fully ſenſible: but we ſhould each of us think very carefully, what his own Share of them is, and wherein it conſiſts. For no one is without his *Talent*, though ſome have more committed to them than others: and they who have leaſt, will be expected to improve what they have*; as our Saviour's Parable very awfully ſhews. The pooreſt Perſon in the World, is capable of being uſeful, ſome Way, to his Fellow-creatures: and the greateſt can never be above the Obligation of imitating, to their Power, the Beneficence of their Creator. They who are engaged in Buſineſs, far from having their Attention confined to themſelves, have uſually, by the very means of their Buſineſs, peculiar Advantages both for knowing and ſupplying the Wants of others. And ſuch as have no particular Employment, have only the Privilege of a freer Choice, what Part they will take in that general one aſſigned to us all, of doing Good.

Since then we are appointed, each in his proper Station, Diſpenſers and *Stewards of the manifold Grace of God*; it concerns us to behave as faithful ones: not to intercept the Streams of the Divine Bounty; nor confine to our own Gratification, what our Maker hath deſigned for the common Benefit of all around us. He hath not indeed fixed the Proportions of any Kind of Charity: for Circum-

* Matth. xxv. 14—30.

ſtances vary ſo infinitely, that general Rules concerning ſuch Matters are impoſſible. And this Latitude ſhould not give Anxiety to any good Mind: for we ſerve a moſt equitable Maſter. But neither ſhould it give Encouragement to bad Minds; and make them imagine, that where nothing is aſcertained, they may do juſt as little as they pleaſe. For God will expect from every one, what may be reaſonably expected from them: and hath left this Matter at large, that we may ſhew, not our Backwardneſs to ſerve him, but our Zeal. Imprudent Zeal he never approves: but Goodneſs, confined within the Bounds of Diſcretion, is always more acceptable to him, in Proportion as it is more abundant. And, though not every Failure in Degree ſhall expoſe us to Puniſhment; yet *he which ſoweth ſparingly, ſhall reap alſo ſparingly: and he which ſoweth bountifully, ſhall reap alſo bountifully* *.

However unactive therefore we may naturally be; yet, as Perſons intruſted by the Lord of all, it imports us greatly to be diligent. For Induſtry is a valuable Part of Faithfulneſs: and *ſlothful Servants* will be conſidered, in the Day of Judgment, as *wicked* ones †. Some Ways of doing Good may poſſibly be leſs pleaſing to us: ſome Perſons our Prejudices, our Paſſions, or Intereſts, would tempt us to overlook, rather than ſerve: and ſome Things,

* 2 Cor. ix. 6. † Matth. xxv. 26.

that

that are only ſeeming Inſtances of Benevolence, we ſhould be willing to miſtake for real ones; and indulge a falſe good Nature, without Regard to Conſequences, however bad. But when we conſider, that in all theſe Caſes we are to act for God; this makes a very great Change in the View of Things: and may both oblige us at ſome Times *to do with our Might* *, what perhaps we could leaſt have wiſhed; and reſtrain us, at others, from doing at all, what injudiciouſly we ſhould have deſired the moſt. Another important Uſe of looking upon ourſelves in this Light, is, that how great ſoever our Talents may be, and how right ſoever the Uſe that we make of them; it muſt ſtill be the ſtrongeſt Reaſon poſſible for Humility, one of the moſt excellent of Virtues, to think, that all we have is given us, and all we do is but *miniſtering*. Then, at the ſame Time that our being intruſted will teach us theſe Things, our being jointly intruſted will teach us another: never to invade each other's Province, nor *ſtretch ourſelves beyond our Meaſure* †; *but as God hath diſtributed to every Man, ſo to walk* ‡: *for he is not the Author of Confuſion, but of Peace* ‖. God is the Judge, and a much better ſurely than we, what Employment is fitteſt for each of his Servants: and how enterprizing ſoever any of us may be now, or how diſcontented ſoever with the Narrowneſs of our own Sphere of Action: we may have Cauſe enough to be

* Eccl. ix. 10. † 2 Cor. x. 14. ‡ 1 Cor. vii. 17. ‖ 1 Cor. xiv. 33.

glad at laſt, that no more was committed to our Care. Yet theſe Reflexions muſt not be carried to ſuch a Length, as to let the Buſineſs of our common Maſter ſuffer, under Pretence of its belonging, not to Us, but our Fellow-ſervant; when there is no Impropriety, but only ſomewhat more Labour or Expence, in ſtepping a little out of our Way, to prevent the ill Conſequences of another's Neglect. It muſt be owned a difficult Matter, not to miſtake in theſe Caſes on one Side or the other: but involuntary Miſtakes will never be imputed to us. It muſt be owned a very ſerious Thing, to be *Stewards of God:* but it is a very noble one, to be employed under our heavenly Father in the Work, that he delights in moſt; and for the Happineſs of our Brethren, perhaps to all Eternity. If indeed we are found, inſtead of this, either hiding the Talents committed to us *, or waſting our Maſter's Goods †, or miſuſing thoſe to whom we ought to have miniſtred ‡; then miſerable will our Condition be, when God ſhall ſay to us, *Give an Account of thy Stewardſhip, for thou mayeſt be no longer Steward* §. But on the other Hand our Comfort is, that a ſincere Endeavour to diſcharge our Office as we ought, whatever our Difficulties, or whatever our Imperfections be, ſhall intitle us to the Sentence, *Well done, good and faithful Servant, enter thou into the Joy of thy Lord* ‖.

* Matth. xxv. 18. † Luke xvi. 1. ‡ Matth. xxiv. 49.
§ Luke xvi. 2. ‖ Matth. xxv. 23.

With

With the Impreſſion therefore of theſe Reflexions upon our Minds, let us now proceed to inquire,

II. What Influence the Thought, that we are *Stewards of the manifold Grace of God*, ſhould have upon us, with reſpect to thoſe particular Methods of doing Good, which are the Occaſion of our preſent Meeting.

Now theſe are of three Sorts, which indeed comprehend almoſt the whole of publick Charity: Places of Maintenance and Inſtruction for Children; Hoſpitals for the Sick; and Houſes of Correction and Work for the Diſſolute and Idle.

Relieving poor Parents from the Burden of a Family, which they are unable to ſupport, muſt needs be a moſt welcome Charity to Them; and is evidently a very uſeful one to the Publick: for it tends to the future Increaſe of the Community, as well as to make the preſent Members of it happy. And teaching poor Children Religion and Virtue, one ſhould think were plainly a beneficial Thing too. For let it prove ineffectual as often as it will; they muſt be a little more likely to abſtain from what is wrong, for being taught what is right. Some Principles, ſome Notions of Life and Behaviour, they will learn: which then would you have them learn, good or bad? They may indeed poſſibly learn bad Things mixed with good, under the Notion of Religion.

But conſidering the Purity, in which Religion is profeſſed amongſt Us, there cannot well be much of this Kind; and there needs not be any Thing. Some Perſons, however, appear to have great Fears of Superſtition; and no Fears of any Thing elſe. But do they really find in fact, that this is the reigning and dangerous Error of the preſent Age? Is it with Superſtition, that your Servants, and your Children as they grow up, and the Generality of the People, are infected; or is it not with Profligateneſs: ſuch open and avowed Contempt of the Laws of God and Man, of all Sobriety and Order, as this Nation hath never known before, nor can long ſubſiſt under an Increaſe of it? But if you are in Earneſt afraid of Superſtition; be afraid where you have Cauſe of Fear. There is a real, and a dreadful Superſtition gaining Ground, that of the Church of *Rome*. And the more ignorant Men are of all Religion, and the more prejudiced againſt their own Form and their own Teachers of Religion; the more eaſily they are won over into that moſt corrupt and formidable Communion. Think then, I intreat you, What would our Condition be; ſhould ever the main Part of this Nation become, one half Papiſts, and the other Profligates! For as to the Scheme of Virtue without Religion: even if it could be put in Practice, yet there is a God, and he ought to be feared; and there is a Support in Piety, of which Mankind ought not to be deprived. But

whoever knows any Thing of the World, muſt ſee, that ſuch a Scheme can never be put in Practice: that human Nature hath daily need, both to be reſtrained from Evil, and excited to Good, in Caſes where none but religious Motives can do either effectually. And as theſe have been conſtantly found neceſſary, in all Ages and Countries whatever: ſo they are certainly of the moſt indiſpenſable Neceſſity, where Incentives to Vice are in the greateſt abundance, and Liberty is the leaſt controlled by Law.

But to return. Together with the general Rules of their Duty, theſe Children are taught ſuch other Knowledge, as may qualify them for Employments fitted to their Station: and then put out to ſuch Employments; with a further Aſſiſtance, where it is requiſite, of ſome little Matter to begin with, towards gaining a Livelihood. And this alſo ſurely muſt be of publick Benefit. Were they indeed either taken or kept away from other Buſineſs, more uſeful, or in which Hands are more wanted; were they raiſed, without viſible Merit, above their original Rank, into one of leſs Labour or more Knowledge, to the Prejudice of thoſe, who were by Birth their Superiors: ſuch Things would be juſt Objections, though not to the Inſtitution of theſe Schools, yet to the Management of them. But when only the Parents are kept from Diſtreſs, and the Children from Idleneſs or wicked

wicked Courſes; when Care is taken, to chuſe them from a Condition ſuitable to that, for which they are deſigned; and neither in their manner of living, nor their Inſtruction, to ſet them above that: every one will allow, it would be excellent private Charity, to do this for a Child; and why not as good publick Charity, to do it for many Children; ſince the greater the Number is, the leſs in Proportion the Expence?

The ſecond Method of doing Good, before us at preſent, is that of Hoſpitals for the Sick. And whatever Objections may be made againſt other Benefactions to the Poor, there can be none againſt reſtoring Eaſe and Health to them: againſt giving them thoſe Helps, which their diſtreſſed Families cannot give; and enabling them to be uſeful again to themſelves, and to the Publick. Now Hoſpitals are infinitely the beſt Means to this neceſſary End. They are a ſure Way of detecting Counterfeits: they preſerve the Sick from unſkilful Hands: they are ſo many publick Schools, where the Knowledge of Medicine is taught, in the moſt effectual manner, for the common Benefit of Mankind. They relieve Multitudes, who either cannot demand, or cannot obtain, parochial Relief: and they do it, beyond Compariſon, in the ſureſt, the ſpeedieſt, and the cheapeſt manner that can be. So that, were we to ſuppoſe even great Miſmanagements in Hoſpitals; they would ſtill remain preferable

to

to all other Methods of providing for the Sick: and yet the Numbers and Characters of the Governors of our preſent Hoſpitals, ſecure them, as far as may be, againſt any Miſmanagement at all. Another Advantage is, that ever ſo little, given to this kind of Charity, hath its proportionable good Effect: and the Diſeaſes and Accidents, which befall the lower Part of the World, are ſo many and frequent, that ever ſo much given may eaſily be employed. Then it well deſerves to be conſidered further, that Sickneſs affords a favourable Opportunity for good Impreſſions: and therefore moſt important Service may be done to poor Creatures in theſe Places, by ſhewing them from Experience the bad Conſequences of vicious Lives, and the good ones of Regularity; by giving them ſtrong Impreſſions of the Excellency of Compaſſion and Mercy, at the Time when they are partaking of it; and awakening them to a Senſe of what their Condition requires of them, and their eternal Happineſs depends upon. But the Benefit of Hoſpitals hath been ſo very well explained to the World of late *, and is ſo generally acknowledged; that I need only add a Word concerning one Sort of them, That for the Diſeaſed in Mind.

Theſe poor Creatures are made by their Diſorder, whilſt it continues, entirely uſeleſs to

* See Dr. *Alured Clarke*'s Sermon before the Governors of the County-Hoſpital at *Wincheſter*, and an Account of the Eſtabliſhment of that Hoſpital, publiſhed in 1737.

Society:

Society: and many of them, at the ſame Time, exceedingly miſerable in themſelves; by the frightful, or the gloomy Train of Ideas, that poſſeſſes their Minds; and the vehement Paſſions, that ſo frequently agitate them. Now when Perſons in low Circumſtances fall into this unhappy State, as many of them do; their Friends are more incapable of taking Care of them, than in any other Caſe whatever: and there is no Way of attempting their Cure, which can poſſibly be attended with ſuch Hope of Succeſs, as placing them in Hoſpitals appropriated to this Purpoſe. Nay indeed, when there appears no Proſpect of a Cure at all, to provide for them as Incurables is a moſt uſeful and excellent Act of Humanity: and the Beginnings, lately made, of a Proviſion of this Sort, well deſerve Encouragement, and peculiarly want it.

The only Kind of Charity, which remains to be mentioned now, is that of Houſes of Correction and Work for the Diſſolute and Idle. The Terror, which theſe Places ſtrike, is one great Benefit: as it prevents, at once, both Crimes and the Conſequences of them. But where that proves ineffectual, the next Advantage of ſuch Houſes is, that Offenders can be immediately ſecured in them: removed out of the Way of endangering the Properties, the Lives, the Virtue of others; and made to feel, that their Attempt of gaining a Livelihood by eaſier Methods than honeſt People do,

ſhall

ſhall only ſubject them to harder Labour, and deſerved Puniſhment. Many of them, we are aſſured, have been brought by theſe Means to a juſt Senſe of their Intereſt and their Duty. Very many more, we have ſad Experience, much need to have this Kindneſs done them. And we cannot but know the Importance, both to Them and to ourſelves, of checking the Growth of Wickedneſs, before it is quite too late to think of attempting it.

Theſe then being the Methods of Charity now before you; conſider well, what Obligations you are under, as *Stewards of God* for the Good of your Fellow-creatures, to aſſiſt in directing and ſupporting them.

Such, in the firſt Place, as are qualified to govern and direct any of theſe Inſtitutions, are bound in Conſcience, not to let ſo excellent Deſigns receive Prejudice, for want of a Succeſſion of fit Perſons to put them in Execution. For they may well ſpare a little Time, both from Pleaſure, and from Buſineſs of other Kinds; to employ it in a manner, ſo productive of Happineſs to the World, and to themſelves. And ſuch as have actually taken this good Work upon them, muſt ever remember, that they are now become Stewards of the Charity of Men, as well as the Bounty of God: and their Faithfulneſs in the Diſcharge of their Truſt is engaged to both. They, whoſe conſtant Attendance cannot be expected, ſhould at leaſt

leaſt acquaint themſelves ſo far with the Management of Things, as to know, and be able to aſſure others, that it is, in the main at leaſt, ſuch as it ought: for, in many Caſes, this alone may be a valuable Service. And all, who profeſs to enter further into the Conduct of Affairs, ſhould ſeriouſly, and frequently, and impartially conſider, what can be reformed in theſe Charities, and what can be improved. A meddling Spirit, fond of diſturbing Things that are well, either to no good Purpoſe, or none that can be obtained, is indeed a very miſchievous one: but prudent, peaceable Endeavours, to make every Thing as perfect as it can be made, are of incredible Uſe. The Work, in which you are engaged, is a very important one: and a ſmall Defect of Attention, a little wrong Bias or miſtaken Judgment, may produce extremely unhappy Effects: may diminiſh conſiderably the Benefit of theſe excellent Deſigns, and make even *your Good evil ſpoken of* *. The Support of voluntary Charities depends entirely on their Reputation: and therefore it concerns you greatly, to avoid, not only every Thing blameable, but every Thing ſuſpicious; and to *cut off Occaſion from them which deſire Occaſion* † to find Fault, *providing for honeſt Things, not only in the Sight of the Lord, but in the Sight of all Men* ‡. But more eſpecially give me Leave to recommend to you, that as you are intruſted for the Good of your Fellow-crea-

* Rom. xiv. 16. † 2 Cor. xi. 12. ‡ 2 Cor. viii. 21.

tures,

tures, you would have great Regard to their eternal Good: and that, as you are employed for the Service of God, you would expreſs your Concern for his Honour, by endeavouring conſcientiouſly to imprint a Senſe of Religion and Virtue upon all that come under your Care in theſe Places. It is the Want of Religion and Virtue, that principally occaſions this dreadful Number of Diſtreſſes and Diſorders in the World: and ſo long as the Cauſe ſubſiſts, the Effect will follow. Let your Children therefore be carefully bred up to Piety, without Superſtition or Uncharitableneſs; to Loyalty, and Honeſty; to Humility, and Induſtry. Let your Sick be inſtructed and admoniſhed, ſuitably to their Capacities, their preſent Condition, and paſt Behaviour. And let the Correction of your Offenders be made as medicinal as it can: and a charitable Care for reclaiming them, by proper Expoſtulations, and friendly Advice, be joined with whatever Severity it is neceſſary they ſhould undergo. There are undoubtedly amongſt them great Objects of Pity; Perſons, of whom there is no Cauſe to deſpair: and ſurely theſe, as far as it is poſſible, ſhould have ſome diſtinguiſhed Regard ſhewn them. But ſo much Regard at leaſt ſhould be ſhewn to them all, and to the Publick at the ſame Time, if we have any Concern for its Welfare; as never to ſuffer Places, appointed for the Puniſhment of Wickedneſs, to become Schools for learning it.

And now, having taken upon me to ſay thus much to you, it is but Juſtice to add, that Exhortations by no Means imply Diſtruſt. *Having Confidence in thy Obedience,* ſaith St. *Paul* to *Philemon, I write unto thee, knowing, that thou wilt alſo do more than I ſay* *. And never can there be better Ground for a Confidence of this Kind, than at preſent: when theſe Charities are conducted by ſo large a Number of good, and wiſe, and experienced Men, under the Inſpection of a Magiſtracy ſo worthy of Honour; and over which preſides a Perſon †, whoſe uncommon Abilities we all ſee exerciſed every Day, for the Promotion of Religion and Virtue, of the Peace and good Order, the Welfare and Happineſs of this great City, with the moſt exemplary Diſintereſtedneſs, and the trueſt Prudence, the moſt active Zeal, and the tendereſt Humanity.

I proceed therefore now, with great Satisfaction, from the Duty of managing theſe Charities well, to that of ſupporting them. And one Way of ſupporting them is, by ſpeaking of them with the Eſteem which they deſerve. Theſe publick Inſtitutions, and ſome of them more eſpecially, have had vehement Accuſations brought againſt them by many Perſons. But ſtay to enquire, and hear, before you condemn. You may poſſibly judge wrong, concerning what ought to be done: and you may very probably be miſinformed, concern-

* Philem. Ver. 21. † Sir *John Barnard.*

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ing what is done. Things which have happened very ſeldom, if at all, may be told as happening frequently. Miſtakes corrected long ago, may be charged as continuing ſtill. Inconveniencies may be unjuſtly heightened: Advantages unjuſtly depreciated. Should this be ſo; and ſhould the Things, againſt which you are declaiming, be all the while excellently good ones: think only, what Harm you are doing to Mankind. Perhaps indeed, nay certainly, they are not perfect. But are they not highly uſeful? Or if not, cannot they be made ſo? If they can, uſe your Endeavours that they may. Shew a good Meaning, and you will acquire an Influence. But even ſhould you after all be unſucceſsful; ſtill reflect a ſecond Time: is it not more eligible, that theſe Inſtitutions ſhould continue as they are, than fall to Ruin? For, ſuppoſing ſome better Way might be contrived; is there any Certainty, is there any Proſpect, of this better Way being taken? And if not; never pull down, till you are likely to build again.

But affording good Words alone to Charity, is very inſufficient. As faithful Stewards of the Divine Bounty, you muſt communicate of the Wealth alſo, which is placed in your Hands for that Purpoſe; *and miniſter, as of the Ability which God giveth* *. The Importance of ſupporting theſe Methods of doing Good, ſo far as it appears from their general Nature,

* 1 Pet. iv. 11.

you have already heard. But when you are acquainted alſo with their large and increaſing Extent, and their neceſſary Dependence on new Benefactions every Year; theſe Things will be weighty additional Motives to your Liberality: and I intreat your compaſſionate Attention to the following Report of them.

Here the Report was read.

YOU have now heard the moſt forcible Arguments, that you well can hear, for contributing plentifully to the Charities before you. Eight Hundred Vagrants and diſorderly Perſons, confined and employed, relieved and corrected, for their own Reformation, and your Security: Thirteen Hundred poor Children maintained, taught their Duty to God and Man, and qualified for Uſefulneſs to the Publick: Thirteen Thouſand ſick Perſons, of whom Care hath been taken in their Sickneſs. And theſe excellent Eſtabliſhments, you perceive at the ſame Time, cannot ſubſiſt without continual Help: though, would but your Bounty afford the Means for it, they are capable of being greatly enlarged. Still a Proviſion is wanted for Multitudes of poor Children: and no ſmall Part of them are either taught, or reduced, to get a Livelihood by Wickedneſs and Diſhoneſty. Still too many Offenders, of more advanced Years, infeſt your Streets. And a very large Proportion of the Sick, that apply to your Hoſpitals, are forced to be rejected,

jected, and left in their Misery, for want of Room to receive them, or Income to support them. Think then, what is incumbent on you in relation to these Things.

There are but two Reasons, and they are both very bad ones, that hinder Men from being charitable according to their Power: either Covetousness makes them unwilling; or Expensiveness makes them imagine they are unable.

If the former influences you; consider well, that your Happiness for ever depends on doing your Duty: but your Happiness even here doth not depend on enlarging your Fortunes. You may, if you will form yourselves to it, enjoy great Satisfaction in doing Good. But what Felicity can you possibly find, either in the Consciousness of having, or the Vanity of being known to have, ever so much Wealth more than you have any Occasion for? And besides, if the Enjoyment of *Man's Life* did *consist in the Abundance of the Things which he possessed* *: Charity may often be so contrived by Prudence, as not to diminish Wealth; and is often so blessed by Heaven, as greatly to increase it. I am sensible, that you have heard these Things, till some of you perhaps have brought yourselves by Degrees to be very little moved by them: but remember, God will expect, that having been reminded of them so frequently, you should regard them the more.

* Luke xii. 15.

And if it be Expenſiveneſs, that with-holds you from Charity; in this Caſe alſo think with yourſelves: For which Purpoſe is it, that your Maker hath intruſted you? For Vices and Follies, or for Pity and Mercy? You may indeed plead, that Luxury, by the Numbers it employs, is perhaps the moſt extenſive Beneficence. But this is a poor Pretence, evidently calculated to make yourſelves eaſy in acting wrong. Undoubtedly the Wiſdom of Providence hath contrived, that many, who will do no Good in any other Way, ſhall however do ſome in this. But then it is uſually done to thoſe who need it leaſt. A Number of Perſons, well able to take Care of themſelves otherwiſe, are maintained, Part in Idleneſs, Part in Profeſſions of no manner of Uſe; whilſt the true Objects of Compaſſion, the Infirm and Helpleſs, are left unregarded to ſuffer and periſh. Luxury therefore contributes nothing to anſwer the Intent of the Charities before us. And even thoſe, for whom it doth provide, it teaches at the ſame Time to ruin themſelves by the Imitation of it. And in Proportion as it prevails, it deſtroys every where, both Virtue and Happineſs, publick and private. But the numberleſs Evils of this moſt fatal Vice cannot be enlarged on now: and if the very little Good, which it doth, were very much more; yet, as no one will pretend to ſay, that this Good was the Motive to his Expenſiveneſs; it can never be a Defence of it. We muſt not therefore think to make our Extravagance

travagance an Excuſe for the Defect of our Alms: or hope in the leaſt to mend our Plea, by calling thoſe Things Neceſſaries of Life, which are indeed very blameable Superfluities.

Let therefore both the frugal and the expenſive Man ſeriouſly conſider, one, what Proportion his Charity bears to his Increaſe; the other, to his Profuſions; and each think of juſtifying themſelves, not to the World, but to God.

Poſſibly it may ſeem a good Reaſon to ſome, for their own Neglect of the Poor, that the Law makes Proviſion for them. And it is certainly an Honour to the Law, that it doth: but no Honour to Us, that it needs do it. Beſides, there are very many Caſes of great Diſtreſs, to which legal Proviſion is neither eaſily, nor properly extended: nor can it give by any Means ſo plentiful Relief, as ſhould be given, to the greater Part of thoſe, to whom it may extend. But ſuppoſe the Law capable of doing every Thing that needs be done: what would be the Conſequence of leaving every Thing to it? That we ſhould loſe intirely the Means, which now we have, of proving to the World, and to ourſelves, the Goodneſs of our own Hearts; and of making an undoubted Free-will Offering to God, out of what he hath given us. Perſons of bad Minds may indeed take Occaſion to neglect the Poor, from our Willingneſs to relieve

them: and thus, by their Fault, the Burden may fall heavier upon Us than it ought. But then God, who hath intruſted us, not only in Conjunction with others to do our Share, but ſeparately by ourſelves to do what we can, *is not unrighteous to forget this our Labour of Love**: but will take abundant Care, that whatever we bear chearfully on his Account, far from giving us Cauſe of Complaint, ſhall aſſuredly be Matter of great Joy to us in the End.

Think then attentively of theſe Conſiderations. They are not propoſed to you, for raiſing a ſudden Warmth of Affection, and ſerving a preſent Turn: it is to your cooleſt Reaſon, that this Addreſs is made. Reflect in Retirement on what you have heard. Act upon deliberate Conviction, act from a ſettled Principle, in what you do: from that ſublime Principle, to which St. *Peter* directs in the next Verſe after the Text; *that God may be glorified in all Things, through Jeſus Chriſt*: that you may expreſs to Him your Senſe of the Duty and Gratitude, which you owe him; that you may improve your own Hearts, by imitating the Goodneſs, which you honour; that you may convince Mankind of the Excellency of the Chriſtian Doctrine. Conſider yourſelves, in this View alſo, as the *Stewards of God*: as intruſted for the Service and Promotion of his Goſpel. For be aſſured, ſuch

* Heb. vi. 10.

important

important and aſtoniſhing Truths as that comprehends, and you have lately heard out of it, were not made known to you, with a Deſign, that you ſhould be indifferent about them; but deeply affected by them yourſelves, and ſeriouſly diligent to engage the Attention of others to them. If then you have any Zeal for the Faith, which you profeſs, as Heaven knows there never was more need: ſhew Men, by its Effects, what it is; and give Demonſtration to the World, how far the true Charity of a good Chriſtian goes beyond the boaſted Benevolence of Unbelievers. Invite Men by theſe Means to a better Opinion of Religion: encourage them by the ſame to a ſteadier Practice of it. *Be watchful, and ſtrengthen*, by every Method you can, *the Things which remain, and are ready to die* *: but particularly make Proviſion in theſe excellent Ways, which are now propoſed to you, for the Inſtruction of the Ignorant, the Converſion of the Vicious, the Spiritual Improvement, as well as Temporal Relief of the Sick: that ſo *the Adminiſtration* of your Charity *may not only ſupply the Want of the Saints, but be abundant alſo by many Thankſgivings unto God* †.

* Rev. iii. 2. † 2 Cor. ix. 12.

SER-

SERMON V.

Preached before the Houſe of Lords in the Abbey-Church of *Weſtminſter*, on *Thurſday*, *May* 29, 1739.

PSALM CVI. 12, 13.

Then believed they his Words, they ſang his Praiſe: they ſoon forgat his Works, they waited not for his Counſel.

THE ſame wiſe and good Being, who hath fitted the whole Frame of this World to the various Wants of his Creatures; hath fitted the Events of Things to our Reformation and moral Improvement. Were they to be conſidered as Events only, it would be Folly not to learn from them: but as they are Leſſons intended by Heaven for our Inſtruction, it is Impiety alſo. The Diſpenſations of Providence, in which we are leaſt intereſted, may teach us a great deal by Analogy, both concerning the Conſequences of our Behaviour, and the Temper of our Hearts: for we ſeldom apprehend how fatally we are capable of erring, till we ſee how other Perſons have acted before us, and what hath followed. But thoſe Tranſactions of former Times, which extend their

their Influence down to Us, as they naturally excite a greater Attention, ſo they generally reward it with more plentiful and more important Matter of Obſervation: and if we will not be made wiſe by the Experience of our Predeceſſors; the only Doubt is, whether poſſibly our own may not teach us too late.

The two great Methods of providential Inſtruction are Mercies and Puniſhments. Undoubtedly our Maker would always prefer the firſt; if it were not that enjoying them for ſome time, without Interruption, tempts us unaccountably to overlook, both His Goodneſs, and our own Duty ariſing from it. Sometimes indeed they, who forget God in their Proſperity, are moved by their Afflictions only to murmur againſt him: but for the moſt part Sufferings have a better Effect; recall to our Minds both our Condition and our Conduct. And it might be hoped, that the very deep Impreſſions, which Divine Judgments make, would naturally be laſting; or however, that when Forgiveneſs had ſucceeded Chaſtiſement, the united Force of Terror and Gratitude would be perpetual. To recollect our paſt Deliverances, and dwell upon the Thoughts of our preſent Happineſs, appears too pleaſing an Employment to grow weariſome. Conſidering both, as Evidences of God's Delight to do us Good, muſt ſurely heighten our Reliſh of them: and preſerving in Memory our Obligation to a proper Return, beſides its being

agreeable to ingenuous Minds, one ſhould imagine, would be ſufficiently recommended to us, by our knowing, that the Continuance of our Bleſſings depends on this Condition.

But Mankind are ſtrangely different in Fact from what Speculation may repreſent them. Be the Advantages of their Condition ever ſo great, many will attend only to its Inconveniencies: and ſeem as if they had rather be miſerable, than not be ungrateful. Others are too intent on the Enjoyment of their Felicity, ever to think, to whom they owe it; or think too much of the viſible Means, to remember the inviſible Author. And unhappily, they who have the livelieſt Senſe of the Goodneſs of God, ſeldom retain it long: *they ſing his Praiſe, and ſoon forget his Works.* Favours, received perſonally by Ourſelves, wear out of our Minds in a very little Time: but Mercies derived to us from a former Age, though continuing to ſubſiſt in full Force, though perhaps improved, affect us no otherwiſe than the Bleſſing of conſtant Health doth; which tempts Many to be irregular, for One whom it makes thankful. Then, to complete the Unhappineſs, ſome who preſerve the moſt laſting Memory of Divine Favours, remember them often partially, and to bad Purpoſes: deduce from them wrong Concluſions, and are led by them into unjuſtifiable Behaviour. Though they do not *forget his Works, they wait not for his Counſel*; but inconſiderately follow

their own Imaginations: or if Instruction forces itself upon them, *they will not abide it* *; nor bear to be restrained, even by the Voice of Heaven.

Now the obvious Method of securing Events of Importance, both from Oblivion and Misconstruction, is by appointing stated and solemn Commemorations of them. God himself hath done this, to preserve a just Sense of his Works of Creation and Redemption: but the Celebration of his providential Goodness he hath left, as it was natural, to human Care. And serious Care ought to be taken; as on the one Hand, that Institutions of this Kind be neither debased to low Occasions, nor perverted to ill Uses: so on the other, that *they, whom the Lord hath redeemed and delivered from the Hand of the Enemy, may offer unto him the Sacrifice of Thanksgiving, and tell out his Works with Gladness; exalt him in the Congregation of the People, and praise him in the Seat of the Elders* †.

This is the Duty, which we are now assembled to perform: and the two Things, requisite to perform it as we ought, are,

I. To consider the Nature of the Blessing, which we commemorate:

II. The Behaviour, to which it directs us.

* So the old Translation. † Ps. cvii. 2, 22, 32.

I. In

I. In ſpeaking of the Bleſſings on this Day reſtored to us, the preceding Evils muſt unavoidably be mentioned: and all Perſons ought to bear with the Mention of what all contributed to, and ſhared in. To whom the chief Load of Guilt was imputable, the publick Voice hath moſt juſtly declared: but every Order of Men was blameable, and every Order puniſhed. Firſt, a Zeal exceſſively angry, for it muſt be acknowledged, was ſhewn in the Church, againſt a very provoking Sect of Zealots: and illegal Powers were exerciſed, to a dangerous Degree, in the State; when the Bounds of legal Power were leſs clearly fixed. Then Fears and Reſentments carried good Men too far: and gave bad Men an Opportunity of leading them inſenſibly further ſtill, by very wicked Arts: till they were neither ſure of retreating with Safety, nor yet could go forward without great Guilt. Conceſſions were made them, in ſome Caſes too large; in moſt, if not all, very ſufficient. But theſe came too late. The Minds of Men were exaſperated, and Confidence in each other loſt: ſo that, inſtead of reconciling, they only gave Ground of Advantage for adding new Demands, which the Makers of them well knew, could not be granted. Inſiſting however that they ſhould, from Diſcontents they broke out into Tumults; and Tumults ſoon heightened into open Rebellion. To have lived in *theſe Beginnings of Sorrows* * muſt

* Mark xiii. 8.

have

have been very dreadful: but how much more, when Diſcord had brought forth its perfect Work; had involved the three Nations in Bloodſhed, and the numberleſs Diſtreſſes, that belong to Civil Wars. After infinite Sacrilege and Devaſtation, committed under Colour of Religion and Freedom, War indeed ceaſed for a Time: but the Fruits of War continued. The primitive Form of our Eccleſiaſtical Government was illegally aboliſhed: the Univerſities, the Clergy, the Body of the People moſt cruelly oppreſſed: till one Part of the Conquerors attempting to extend their Oppreſſion over the reſt, they took a deſperate Reſolution, with which they perſuaded each other Heaven had inſpired them, to eſtabliſh Themſelves by overturning the Whole. Then the Majeſty of the Crown, the Honours of the Nobility, the Privileges of the Commons, fell a promiſcuous Sacrifice, as the Church had done before, to Enthuſiaſtick Fury. Freſh Commotions and a new Effuſion of Blood attended this Cataſtrophe. The Subverters of lawful Authority by Force, underwent repeated Subverſions of their own one by another: the Patrons of unbounded Liberty ſunk under the Dominion of abſolute Tyranny: the Aſſerters of an imaginary Purity in Religion, promoted its being defiled with pernicious Corruptions: and, by a moſt inſtructive Severity of Providence, all in their Turns were made to *eat of the Fruit of their own Way, and were filled*

filled with their own Devices *, to ſo ſurprizing a Degree of Exactneſs; that there was not perhaps any one ill Thing, which either Side did, but the Juſtice of God returned it viſibly upon them.

Such was the State of our Anceſtors for many Years: groaning under their preſent Evils, and *their Hearts failing them for Fear, and for looking after thoſe Things which were coming on the Earth* †. But moſt unexpectedly, when all Attempts for reſtoring our Government and Laws had proved ineffectual; when the few remaining Defenders of them had neither Strength of their own, nor Hope of Aſſiſtance from abroad; when their Oppoſers had all the Power of the Nation in their Hands; and, however divided amongſt themſelves, were engaged by Principle and Intereſt, by Fear and Hatred, to ſupport their common Cauſe: then did God *bow the Heart of this People, even as the Heart of one Man* ‡, to recall their exiled Sovereign, and re-eſtabliſh their ancient Conſtitution in Church and State. *The merciful and gracious Lord hath ſo done his marvellous Works, that they ought to be had in Remembrance* ||. *Praiſed be the Lord daily: even the God who helpeth us, and poureth his Benefits upon us* §.

* Prov. i. 31. † Luke xxi. 26. ‡ 2 Sam. xix. 14.
|| Pſal. cxi. 4. § Ibid. lxviii. 19.

But

But great as this Deliverance was; yet every Fibre of ſuch *a Root of Bitterneſs* * could not be extirpated immediately: and a new Evil *ſprung up* from it, which once more threatened us with Ruin. Our Princes, deprived in their tender Years of the Inſtruction and Example of their Royal Father, baniſhed into the Midſt of Temptation, and ſeeing and feeling the terrible Effects of a pretended or miſguided Zeal for our Liberties and Religion; returned to us with Diſpoſitions unfavourable to Both. Theſe, in the Reign of the younger of them, had reduced us to the very Extremity of Danger: when the Mercy of Providence, again interpoſing, delivered us; and not only completed, but we hope hath ſecured to us for ever, the whole Bleſſing of the Reſtoration, under our preſent happy Eſtabliſhment. Our Sovereign, we are ſure, hath the ſincereſt Regard both to our Civil and Religious Rights: his Poſterity have deeply imbibed the ſame generous Principle: and all, that we can have to fear, muſt be from ourſelves.

II. Let us therefore proceed to conſider, what Behaviour the great Event, which we commemorate, preſcribes: what is the *Counſel*, which God hath given us by it.

The greateſt Part of the Inſtruction indeed muſt ariſe from our Sufferings: but the whole

* Heb. xii. 15.

Power of making Advantage of it, ariſes from our Deliverance. And our Sufferings being cauſed by mutual Vehemence, and our Deliverance being effected in Peace: both may well diſpoſe us to a mild Conſideration of what they teach. To make Invectives now, againſt Perſons who are gone long ago to anſwer for their Sins before God, can be of little Benefit: and to charge others raſhly with inheriting their Faults, may be great Injuſtice: beſides that Generoſity ſhould reſtrain one Side from Bitterneſs; and Decency, the other. Undoubtedly Caution, to prevent the Repetition of paſt Evils, is highly requiſite. But where ſo large a Proportion of them was brought about by ſuch as meant it not, the moſt needful Caution is, that we each of us avoid falling into the ſame Error: that we recollect, whatever our Station or Profeſſion be, not only the Injuries, which our Predeceſſors in the ſame underwent, but chiefly thoſe which they did; and apply our Knowledge of former Times, not to exaſperate Others, but to amend or warn Ourſelves. This is the Uſe, which ought to be made of the plaineſt Parts of the Hiſtory: and much more ſhould we take Care, not to grow warm about the doubtful ones: but allowing Men to differ from us, as they may very innocently, concerning the Characters and Conduct of Perſons and Parties formerly, endeavour all to agree in the one material Point, our own Conduct now. And ſurely the Period of Time before our View,

ſuggeſts

ſuggeſts very plainly moſt important Directions to every ſort of Perſons amongſt us.

It muſt remind the Governors of the Eſtabliſhed Church, that rigorous Treatment of ſuch as diſſent from it, and Endeavours to extend their own Authority, or Influence, beyond reaſonable Bounds, are Methods as contrary to Prudence, as they are to Religion: that neither Learning, nor Piety, nor Eminence in other Virtues, will be able to ſupport them, without a ſuitable Degree of Humility and Forbearance; but that Care to be inoffenſive, and Diligence to be uſeful, are their true Strength. And at the ſame Time, they, who are prejudiced againſt the Eſtabliſhed Church, ought to remember, that its Ruin was attended with that of the whole Conſtitution: that there followed in its Place, firſt another Church-power, allowed to be much more terrible, then all manner of Confuſion: and this continued, till Providence re-eſtabliſhed us on the old Foundation. So that even in thoſe Times their Schemes were far from producing any Good: and it cannot be fitting to revive them now; when, God be thanked, there never was ſo little of the bad Spirit, which they pretend to fear. We do not deſire to oppreſs: we do not deſire to be formidable. We only deſire Protection and Support in ſerving the Cauſe of Religion and Virtue: and it is a very unkind and diſcouraging Return made us, for avoiding the Faults im-

puted to our Predeceſſors; if ſome will not ſee it, and others will give us no Proof of their ſeeing it.

From the Occurrences of the ſame Times, Counſellors of Princes ought to learn, that the great Intereſt of the Sovereign and their own is, never to bear hard upon the Liberties of the People; for they will reſtore themſelves with dangerous Force: never to give them Jealouſy; for too often ſcarce any Thing will remove it: never to deſpiſe even their leſs reaſonable Complaints; but, as far as it is poſſible, always promote the publick Good by Methods agreeable to the publick Inclination. And the ſeveral Parts of the Legiſlature ſhould learn, each to maintain their own Privileges with calm Reſolution; but to abſtain religiouſly from mutual Encroachments: for not only the ſacred Obligation of Juſtice requires it; but Experience hath ſhewn, that when once the inward Balance of a Conſtitution is broken, endleſs Diſorders are likely to follow: and no Part of the Whole is in Danger of ſuffering more, than that which at firſt appeared to be the Gainer.

But beſides the ſeparate Admonitions, given by the Hiſtory of this Day to particular Sorts of Perſons; the Inſtruction, which it offers to us all in common, deſerves our ſerious Attention.

Much of the Miſery, undergone by theſe Nations, was owing to that unhappy Proneneſs, which there is in Mankind, not only to magnify the real Inconveniencies of their Condition, but to add imaginary ones to them. And their own ill Conduct is always the laſt Thing on which they charge them; that of their Superiors, uſually the firſt. For theſe Inconveniencies, they flatter themſelves in the next Place, there muſt be ſome Remedy: and then, whatever Scheme for Reformation either their own Imagination preſents, or any Body elſe ſuggeſts, they embrace it immediately, run haſtily away with it; and ſoon grow too vehement, ever to conſider, whether it be not impracticable or ineffectual, unjuſt or pernicious. Indeed to be abſolutely againſt all Changes, is either great Folly, or great Wickedneſs. Things may have been wrong conſtituted originally: they may have degenerated ſince: they may be attended now with different Circumſtances; and Alterations may both be reaſonable to cure preſent Complaints, and neceſſary to prevent worſe Diſorders. But ſtill the general Preſumption ſhould always be in Favour of what is eſtabliſhed: and no Innovations, greater than need, ought ever to be attempted. Intereſt, Opinion, Reſentment, Warmth of Temper, place different Things before different Perſons, in very ſtrong Lights: too ſtrong perhaps to ſee them diſtinctly; at leaſt, to obſerve every Thing connected with them. On theſe Views however they boldly

act: heat one another, ſometimes by Concurrence, ſometimes by Oppoſition: doubt nothing in themſelves, ſuſpect nothing in thoſe who join with them, pardon nothing in thoſe who differ from them: deſtroy the Quiet of Numbers who have not deſerved it, as well as their own: and all to do Miſchief, it may be, inſtead of Good; even though they intend Good. For not only Projects, that look plauſible to ſuch Perſons, may be very hurtful notwithſtanding; perhaps to Themſelves, perhaps to Others, who have an equal Right to be conſidered: but ſuppoſing them innocent, ſuppoſing them beneficial; yet attempting them raſhly, may do unknown Harm, ſhould they miſcarry; and coſt infinitely too dear, ſhould they ſucceed. If a Nation is to be put into a Ferment for them; and the Multitude called in, to be vehement about Matters, of which they are no Judges: this in itſelf is a dreadful Evil; and may poſſibly riſe to a deſtructive Height. For in ſome Circumſtances it is much eaſier to inflame Perſons, than to foreſee when they will cool: and there is one Point of yet greater Importance than reforming Faults, preſerving Reverence to Authority. If this be once loſt, poſſibly a blameleſs Conduct of Affairs, which yet no Body can ever promiſe, may not reſtore it: and unleſs it be reſtored, every Thing will be levelled. Sooner or later indeed, God knows how long it may be firſt, ſome ſort of Order muſt return: but, without the peculiar Interpo-

ſition of a kind Providence, the beautiful Order of a Free Government will not. And it ought to be well conſidered, that Perſons who begin with moderate and moſt laudable Intentions, may forget Themſelves, may be entangled with Others, may be led or driven into doing what they greatly diſapprove; or may loſe all Power of ſtopping Miſchief, when it is once ſet to work; and have nothing left, but to periſh with the Ship in the Storm, which they have helped to raiſe. Theſe Dangers indeed cannot be Reaſons for complying with every Thing: for in vain will Heaven have reſtored to us our happy Form of Government, if we ſuffer it to be a Form only. But they are powerful Reaſons for thinking coolly what deſerves Oppoſition, and oppoſing it with Temper: for conſidering who are the Perſons really to blame, in what Degree upon the whole they are ſo, and how difficult it is not to be ſo: for redreſſing Grievances by no other than regular Methods; and waiting for Opportunities, not forcing them: for examining faithfully the Purity of our own Intentions; for aſking ourſelves often, how far we mean to go; and obſerving carefully, what thoſe Perſons aim at, with whom we are engaged: for weighing well what Remedies the publick Conſtitution will bear, under what it will be likely to ſink; and ſeriouſly recollecting, how great Multitudes have their Fate involved in that of the Whole. There can be no Cautions more evidently juſt than theſe; though we

had not had Experience to teach us ſo awfully, that for want of regarding them in the Times now before us, no one Scheme ended as it was deſigned at firſt. Every Thing was propoſed to be reformed into Perfection: every Thing, inſtead of that, was compleatly brought to Ruin: and happy did Men think themſelves, with very good Cauſe, when at laſt they were able to get back into the Situation, which they had imagined before to be ſo intolerable. *Now all theſe Things happened unto them for Enſamples: and they are written for our Admonition* *.

Nor let it be replied, that though the bold Attempts for Reformation and Liberty miſcarried then, they may ſucceed another Time. Let us rather reflect, that though the Confuſion and Slavery, which they introduced, proved but temporary then, the next Trial may perpetuate them. Liberty is a Bleſſing of ſuch unſpeakable Value, that no Wonder if the very Name of it be dear to Men: but the Name miſapplied was fatal to our Forefathers; and may be ſo to Us. Licentiouſneſs of Speech and Writing, a favourite and moſt entertaining Species of Liberty to the Inconſiderate, had the Effects amongſt Them, which it muſt have every where: not only of injuring particular Perſons in the moſt ſenſible manner; but of deſtroying that Regard to Stations and Offices, Ranks and Orders of Men, which muſt be

* 1 Cor. x. 11.

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preſerved, or Society muſt be diſſolved. For when once contending Parties, by their mutual Accuſations and Aſperſions, have taught the People to think ill, or meanly, of all Perſons that are, or can be their Governors; what remains for them, but to think in the ſame manner of Government itſelf, and treat it accordingly? Conſidering indeed, how artfully Men have learnt to diſguiſe theſe Enormities, there may perhaps be no effectual Method of reſtraining them by Law, without very great Danger of hurtful Conſequences from the Reſtraint. But to take this Advantage for being guilty of them, is a moſt ungenerous Uſe of Freedom againſt ſuch as wiſh it well; and a moſt unwiſe one, againſt ſuch as do not. All good Men therefore ſhould labour unanimouſly to keep down this bad Spirit, each on his own Side; for in vain do we exclaim againſt what we indulge: and to diſcountenance it ſo ſtrongly by expreſſing their private Abhorrence of it, that there may be no Reaſon, and no Pretence, if poſſible, for a publick Proviſion againſt it. Liberty cannot be ſupported, any more than Power, but by exerciſing it with Moderation. And they that overturn either, by carrying it to extravagant Heights, after ſuch Warning as Providence hath given us, muſt neither expect any Remedy, nor much Pity.

But indeed there are Perſons, who ſeem almoſt to think, that Liberty cannot be extend-

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ed too far: that every Diminution of Authority is ſo much Gain, every Increaſe of it ſo much Loſs, to the Community. Now if this be true, Laws and Government are a publick Nuiſance. And if not, Men ought to conſider, what Reſtraints are requiſite, as well as what may be abuſed; and remember, that a Right to do Things, neceſſary to be done, muſt be veſted ſomewhere, and muſt be exerted. Authority indeed is of a growing Nature: but ſo is Averſion to Authority: and Freedom unreſtrained is Power unreſtrained. No Tyrannies have been more inſupportable, than thoſe of the Multitude: nor can any Perſons be more juſtly dreaded, than they who declaim for Liberty, in the Spirit of Perſecution; and demand it with Inſolence, in the Midſt of the Enjoyment of it. Such Behaviour plainly ſhews, that not content with being free, they want to rule: and ſince they cannot plead, that any harſh Treatment hath provoked them to theſe Outrages; they are ſo far leſs excuſable, than ſome of their Predeceſſors in the Times of our Troubles.

But however ſtrongly we are cautioned againſt Licentiouſneſs, by the Sufferings of former Days; there hath ariſen notwithſtanding in our own, one very ſhocking Kind of it, almoſt peculiar to this Nation: that of publickly treating Religion with Contempt; and after magnifying Morals, merely in Oppoſition to it, explaining them away to juſt nothing.

Setting

Setting the World at large in theſe Reſpects, appears to be a principal Point, which ſome have at Heart: whoſe Character in Scripture might ſurely have given a more general Suſpicion of them, than it hath: that *while they promiſe others Liberty, they are themſelves the Servants of Corruption**. And too many, who have no Deſign of contributing to the Progreſs of Irreligion, ſee it however with great Tranquillity. Let Men think, let Men act, juſt as they will, provided they are not Bigots, but Perſons of free Principles; the Publick is ſafe, and all is well. But is it ſafe, that they ſhould be Bigots to Atheiſm, Bigots to Profligateneſs? Or can it be a Matter of Indifference, whether they have a good and right Rule of Conduct, though it were with ſome Miſtakes; or whether they have none at all, or a quite wrong one? We own, that falſe Notions about Religion were one great Cauſe of the Sufferings of this Nation. But ſo were falſe Notions about Freedom, another. And why are Miſtakes, or even wilful Abuſes, a Reaſon for trampling upon the former, when they are not thought a Reaſon againſt exalting the latter without Bounds? We own, that Superſtition and Enthuſiaſm ought to be guarded againſt: and that this is a moſt important Leſſon of Providence to us, on this Day. But it cannot be right to guard againſt them, by rooting out of Mens Minds the Re-

* 2 Pet. ii. 19.

verence

verence due to the Author of Nature: or by taking Methods, which, in the natural Courſe of Things, will bring one or both of them back upon us, as perhaps we have begun to experience; or at leaſt will bring Evils, not leſs formidable. Publick Happineſs cannot ſubſiſt, without ſocial Virtue and moral Self-government: nor can either of theſe ſubſiſt, without Regard to God. Nothing, but the Thought of His ſeeing and rewarding, can poſſibly have Force ſufficient, in all Caſes, to reſtrain Mens Paſſions, to counterbalance their preſent Intereſts; to excite the Indolent, keep the Enterprizing within due Bounds, and unite all in making the common Good their common End.

We ſhall therefore neglect the moſt important of the *Counſels* of Providence on this Day, if we learn not, from ſo inſtructive a Diſpenſation of it, that juſt Senſe of our Duty to the Governor and Lawgiver of the World, which if our Forefathers had preſerved, theſe Miſeries had never happened; and if We preſerve, they will never happen more. For as, on the one Hand, Religion enforces powerfully that neceſſary Caution, expreſſed by the Prophet *Ezra*; *Seeing thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve, and haſt given us ſuch Deliverance as this; ſhould we again break thy Commandments, wouldſt thou not be angry with us,*

us, till thou hadst consumed us:* So on the other, it supports us with that noble Confidence, expressed by the Prophet *Samuel: Fear not; but serve the Lord with all your Heart: for the Lord will not forsake his People, for his great Names sake. Only fear the Lord, and serve him in Truth: for consider, how great Things he hath done for you †.*

* Ezra ix. 13, 14. † 1 Sam. xii. 20, 22, 24.

SER-

SERMON VI.

Preached before the Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel in Foreign Parts, in the Pariſh-Church of St. *Mary-le-Bow*, on *Friday*, *February* 20, 1740-1.

MARK vi. 34.

And Jeſus, when he came out, ſaw much People; and was moved with Compaſſion towards them, becauſe they were as Sheep not having a Shepherd: and he began to teach them many Things.

THIS Paſſage of the Evangeliſt expreſſes, in ſo ſtrong and engaging a Manner, the benevolent Temper of our bleſſed Lord, and his tender Regard to the ſpiritual Wants of Men, that, if we ſuffer our Minds to dwell upon it a while, it cannot fail of exciting the ſame Diſpoſition in Us: eſpecially if we conſider, that the View, which he is here deſcribed to have had, of their deſtitute Condition, not only induced him *to teach them* Himſelf *many Things* concerning *the Kingdom of God**; but cauſed that moſt ſerious Re-

* Luke ix. 11.

flexion

flexion and Exhortation, *The Harveſt truly is plenteous, but the Labourers are few; pray ye therefore the Lord of the Harveſt, that he will ſend forth Labourers into his Harveſt* †: immediately after which, He ſent forth *his twelve Diſciples* to preach the Goſpel ‡; as he did the *Seventy* at another Time, on the very ſame Motive, mentioned by another Evangeliſt in the very ſame Words ‖: thus opening the Way, by his previous Care of *the loſt Sheep of the Houſe of Iſrael* §, for uniting us all into *one Fold under one Shepherd* **.

To carry on the great Work which He began, of directing Mankind to preſent and future Happineſs, is the End of this Society: incorporated by a Prince, to whom Religion and Liberty will have eternal Obligations; and eſtabliſhed, firſt for the Support of Chriſtianity in our Colonies and Factories abroad, then for the Propagation of it amongſt the Heathens intermixed with them, and bordering upon them; but taking its Name from the remoter and more extenſive Part of the Deſign.

Every poſſible Reaſon required our Predeceſſors in this excellent Undertaking to begin with inſpecting the State of the *Engliſh* Plantations in *America*. And nothing could

† Matth. ix. 36—38. ‡ Matth. x. 1. ‖ Luke x. 1, 2.
§ Matth. x. 6. ** John x. 16.

be

be more applicable to them on that Occaſion, than the Words of the Text: *They ſaw much People, and were moved with Compaſſion towards them; becauſe they were as Sheep not having a Shepherd.* The *European* Inhabitants there being private Adventurers, neither numerous, nor rich, nor certain of Succeſs, nor unanimous in Belief, eſtabliſhed in ſeveral Provinces no Form whatever of publick Worſhip and Inſtruction. Too many of them carried but little Senſe of Chriſtianity abroad with them: a great Part of the reſt ſuffered it to wear out gradually: and their Children grew of courſe to have yet leſs than they: till in ſome Countries there were ſcarce any Footſteps of it left, beyond the mere Name. No Teacher was known, no Religious Aſſembly held; the Lord's Day diſtinguiſhed only by more general Diſſoluteneſs; the Sacrament of Baptiſm not adminiſtered for near twenty Years together, nor that of the Lord's Supper for near ſixty, amongſt many thouſands of People, who did not deny the Obligation of theſe Duties, but lived notwithſtanding in a ſtupid Neglect of them. Such was the State of Things in more of our Colonies than one: and where it was a little better, it was however lamentably bad. Some Perſons appear very deſirous of ſeeing, what ſort of Creatures Men would be, without the Knowledge of God. Here a ſufficient Trial was made of this: and it ſhewed to an unhappy Degree of Certainty, that they would be wicked, and profligate,

profligate, and brutal in every Reſpect, and return in a few Generations to entire Barbariſm. Poſſibly indeed they might have been delivered from this Evil, by that of Popery; which, always taking Advantage of Ignorance and Profaneneſs, had already begun to ſpread; and dreadful was the Alternative of one or the other. In theſe Circumſtances, the poor Inhabitants made, from all Parts, the moſt affecting Repreſentations of their deplorable Condition: the Truth of which was but too fully confirmed by their reſpective Governors, and the Perſons of principal Note in each Province. There could not be worthier Objects of Regard, than ſuch Complainants. And if they, who remained inſenſible, did not deſerve Pity ſo much, they wanted it ſtill more. The Society therefore, in Proportion to their own Ability, and the Need of each Place, firſt ſent over Miſſionaries, to perform the Offices of Religion amongſt them; then Schoolmaſters, to inſtruct their Children in the Principles of it: who, after *enduring much Contradiction of Sinners* *, and going through a great Variety of Labours and Difficulties, have, through the Bleſſing of God, made a remarkable Change in the Face of Things; and laid a noble Ground-work, of what, we hope, will every Day be carried on towards Perfection. But at preſent much remains to be done. Multitudes continue, as before, in a thoughtleſs Diſregard to almoſt every Part

* Heb. xii. 3.

of Chriſtianity: and Multitudes alſo are daily petitioning for Help: which to ſome we cannot give at all; and to others ſo little, that they have Divine Service only once in many Weeks; and ſeveral Diſtricts of ſixty, ſeventy, and eighty Miles long, have but one Miniſter to officiate in each of them.

The next Object of the Society's Concern, were the poor Negroes. Theſe unhappy Wretches learn, in their native Country, the groſſeſt Idolatry, and the moſt ſavage Diſpoſitions; and then are ſold to the beſt Purchaſer: ſometimes by their Enemies, who would elſe put them to Death; ſometimes by their neareſt Friends, who are either unable or unwilling to maintain them. Their Condition in our Colonies, though it cannot well be worſe than it would have been at home, is yet nearly as hard as poſſible: their Servitude moſt laborious, their Puniſhments moſt ſevere. And thus many Thouſands of them ſpend their whole Days, one Generation after another, undergoing with reluctant Minds continual Toil in this World, and comforted with no Hopes of Reward in a better. For it is not to be expected, that Maſters, too commonly negligent of Chriſtianity themſelves, will take much Pains to teach it their Slaves: whom even the better Part of them are in a great Meaſure habituated to conſider, as they do their Cattle, merely with a View to the Profit ariſing from them. Not a few therefore have

have openly oppoſed their Inſtruction; from an Imagination, now indeed proved and acknowledged to be groundleſs, that Baptiſm would entitle them to Freedom. Others, by obliging them to work on *Sundays* to provide themſelves Neceſſaries, leave them neither Time to learn Religion, nor any Proſpect of being able to ſubſiſt, if once the Duty of reſting on that Day makes Part of their Belief. And ſome, it may be feared, have been averſe to their becoming Chriſtians, becauſe, after that, no Pretence will remain for not treating them like Men. When theſe Obſtacles are added to the Fondneſs they have for their old Heatheniſh Rites, and the ſtrong Prejudices they muſt have againſt Teachers from among thoſe, whom they ſerve ſo unwillingly; it cannot be wondered, if the Progreſs made in their Converſion prove but ſlow. After ſome Experience of this, Catechiſts were appointed in two Places, by way of Trial, for Their Inſtruction alone: whoſe Succeſs, where it was leaſt, hath not been inconſiderable; and ſo great in the Plantations belonging to the Society, that out of two hundred and thirty, at leaſt ſeventy are now Believers in Chriſt. And there is lately an Improvement to this Scheme begun to be executed, by qualifying and employing young Negroes, prudently choſen, to teach their Countrymen: from which, in the Opinion of the beſt Judges, we may reaſonably promiſe ourſelves that this miſerable *People*, the Generality of whom have

hitherto *ſat in Darkneſs, will ſee great Light* *.

There ſtill remains another Branch of the Society's Care, the *Indians* bordering on our Settlements. Theſe conſiſt of various Nations, valuable for ſome of their Qualities, but immerſed in the vileſt Superſtitions, and engaged in almoſt perpetual Wars againſt each other, which they proſecute with Barbarities unheard of amongſt the reſt of Mankind: implacable in their Reſentments, when once provoked; boundleſs in their Intemperance, when they have Opportunities for it, and at ſuch Times miſchievous in the higheſt Degree: impatient of Labour, to procure themſelves the common Conveniencies of Life; inhumanly negligent of Perſons in Years; and, if Accounts of ſuch Things may be credited, not ſcrupling to kill and eat their neareſt Relations, when the long Expeditions, which they make, for Hunting, or againſt Enemies, have reduced them to Streights. Now theſe poor Creatures alſo, diligent Endeavours have been uſed to enlighten and reclaim, on ſuch Occaſions, and by ſuch Methods, as were leaſt ſuſpicious. For, without due Precautions, Harm would be done, inſtead of Good, where natural Jealouſy is ſo induſtriouſly fomented by an artful Neighbour. And, after all Precautions, it cannot be an eaſy Work, to convert Nations, whoſe Manners are ſo uncultivated; whoſe Languages are ſo diffe-

* Matth. iv. 16.

rent,

rent, so hard to learn, and so little adapted to the Doctrines of Religion; with whom we scarce ever contract Affinities; and who seldom continue long enough in the same Place, to let any good Impressions fix into Habits. Yet, notwithstanding these Difficulties, which frustrated formerly a very expensive Attempt, another hath been made of late; and, through the Blessing of God, hath so reformed and improved the Morals, together with the Notions, of one *Indian* Tribe *, that we cannot but hope the rest will be induced, by seeing their Happiness, to follow their Example.

You have now heard in brief the State of our Colonies, with Respect to Religion. And were the Prospect of further Success much smaller than it is, yet our Rule would be, to do our Duty, and leave the Event to Heaven. Persons of unwilling or desponding Minds may easily find Arguments to prove every good Design unpromising, or even impracticable. But the natural Dictate of Piety and Virtue is, to try. And the express Command of our blessed Lord is, that *the Gospel be preached to every Creature* †. Nor is only the Offer of Instruction to Heathens, but the Continuance of it for ever amongst Christians, the Will of Him, who, as *he gave some, Apostles and Evange-*

* The *Mohawks:* who compose two Christian Congregations, each consisting of above 200 Persons. Their Schoolmaster is a *Mohawk*. There are also some Converts amongst the *Oneidan* and *Tuscarary Indians*.

† Mark xvi. 15.

Lists, gave *some* alſo, *Paſtors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the Saints, and the edifying of his Body* *. By endeavouring to our Power, that theſe Things be done; we ſhall pay Obedience to his Authority, and imitate his Example: we ſhall give a Proof to our own Hearts, that we are indeed his Diſciples; and convince the World, that Zeal for Religion is not yet extinguiſhed: we ſhall habituate ourſelves to the moſt amiable of Virtues, Goodwill to Mankind in the moſt important of their Intereſts: we ſhall ſerve the Purpoſes of Providence; which have their Accompliſhment, *whether Men will hear, or whether they will forbear* †: and how much ſoever we may *labour in vain* with Reſpect to others; *yet our Judgment will be with the Lord, and our Work with our God* ‡.

But the ſame God hath promiſed, that his Truth ſhall finally prevail upon Earth. And though we cannot ſay, at what Time, or by what Degrees, this Promiſe ſhall be fulfilled; yet we have Room to hope, that every ſincere Endeavour is all along contributing ſomething towards its Completion. The good Seed, which appears to lie dead for a while, will ſpring up in its Seaſon: that, which ſeems to ſhoot weakly at firſt, will gain Strength inſenſibly, through the favourable Influences of Heaven: and *the Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, be-*

* Eph. iv. 11, 12. † Ezek. ii. 5. ‡ Iſa. xlix. 5.

come

come a Tree *. Thus have theſe Colonies themſelves grown: thus hath Chriſtianity grown from its Beginning, both in other Places, and in Them alſo: nor have we any Reaſon to doubt its going on to do ſo ſtill. In leſs than forty Years, under many Diſcouragements, and with an Income very diſproportionate to the Vaſtneſs of the Undertaking, a great deal hath been done: though little Notice may have been taken of it, by Perſons unattentive to theſe Things, or backward to acknowledge them. Near a hundred Churches have been built: above ten thouſand Bibles and Common-Prayers, above a hundred thouſand other pious Tracts diſtributed: great Multitudes, upon the Whole, of Negroes and *Indians* brought over to the Chriſtian Faith: many numerous Congregations have been ſet up, which now ſupport the Worſhip of God at their own Expence, where it was not known before; and ſeventy Perſons are conſtantly employed, at the Expence of the Society, in the farther Service of the Goſpel †. All this, we grant, makes but a ſmall Appearance, in a Tract of Land, extending ſixteen hundred Miles. But it is an encouraging Specimen, however, of what longer Time and more liberal Aſſiſtance may effect.

* Matth. xiii. 31, 32.

† Since the preaching of this Sermon, all theſe Numbers have been much increaſed. The Miſſionaries, Catechiſts and Schoolmaſters are now, 1765, above 100.

Both the Hopes, and the Means, of ſupporting Chriſtianity amongſt our own People there, are juſt the ſame as here at home. And though the Negroes and *Indians* are prejudiced againſt it; and but poorly qualified, in compariſon, to judge of the Evidence of it: yet they and all Men *have the Work of the Law written in their Hearts, their Conſciences alſo bearing witneſs* *. They may be convicted but too eaſily of tranſgreſſing evident Duties of Nature: and when once they ſee their Need of Repentance and Pardon, they will gladly receive the Goſpel of Chriſt, of which theſe two are the diſtinguiſhing Articles. It will appear in itſelf infinitely preferable to what they have believed hitherto. The Teachers of it will appear, both from their ſuperior Knowledge, and good Lives, worthy of Credit. The Profeſſors of it around them, will bear a Teſtimony to it, in ſome Reſpects the ſtronger, for their being often condemned by it. And if ſuch Arguments do not amount, after all, to the higheſt Evidence; they afford however very rational Motives of Aſſent, eſpecially to Perſons capable of no further Information: and were theſe Motives weaker than they are, yet, the Grace of God producing by them ſo powerful an Effect on the Minds of Men, we undoubtedly approve ourſelves, by propoſing them, His Miniſters for the Happineſs of our Fellow-creatures; and may juſtly be *confident, that he who hath*

* Rom. ii. 15.

begun

begun a good Work in them, will perform it * perfectly.

But perhaps not our Succeſs, but the Uſe and Benefit of it, will be called in queſtion. Now of this, we apprehend, there is abundant Proof. The bare Profeſſion and outward Appearance of ſuch a Religion, as the Chriſtian is, if taught in any tolerable Purity, muſt have ſome right Influence: and the Body of a People cannot go the utmoſt Lengths in Wickedneſs, whilſt that Appearance ſubſiſts. What Lengths they would go in Time, if it were loſt, as we have not experienced, we are not apt to conſider. But a little Reflexion on the Number and Strength of human Paſſions, and the Abilities, which we have, of finding Means to gratify them, would give us a high Value of whatever hath any peculiar Force to reſtrain them. The one Inſtitution of a Day of holy Reſt, is not only, under prudent Regulations, a great Refreſhment to the Bulk of Mankind; but greatly tends to civilize them alſo, by uniting Neighbourhoods in formed Aſſemblies, to acknowledge their common Dependence on God, and Relation to each other, with Hearts diſengaged from ſelfiſh Attentions, and open to friendly Regards. Nor is it poſſible, be they ever ſo negligent Hearers of publick Worſhip and Inſtruction, but conſiderable Impreſſions, at leaſt general ones, muſt remain upon their Minds. And moſt evidently the Impreſſions

* Phil. i. 6.

of

of Religion diſpoſe Men to every Thing productive of common Good: to Juſtice and Veracity, and the Reverence of an Oath; without which the Intercourſe of Man with Man is not a Moment ſafe: to Faithfulneſs, Duty, and Love in the ſeveral Relations of Life, publick and private: to Mildneſs, Charity, and Compaſſion in their whole Behaviour: to Sobriety and Induſtry, the Pillars of national Wealth and Greatneſs: and to that joyful Hope of a better World, which is our trueſt Direction, and firmeſt Support, in every Stage of our Journey through This. Many more Perſons will be thus influenced in various Degrees, than are uſually obſerved: for a regular, inoffenſive Behaviour affords little Matter of Speculation and Diſcourſe. And though ſtill the Generality may be bad; yet, if left to themſelves, they would certainly have been worſe. Every body owns, that a wrong Belief hath great Power to deprave Mens Morals. Surely then a right one muſt have ſome Power to reform them. And if not ſo much as might be wiſhed; this is no more an Argument againſt the Uſefulneſs of Religion, than of Reaſon: but a ſtrong Argument, why Both ſhould be cultivated to the utmoſt; and carefully applied to ſo important a Purpoſe. If our Colonies had not experienced great Evils from the Decay of Chriſtianity amongſt them; they would never have petitioned us ſo earneſtly for Inſtruction in it, as they have done. And if they had not experienced great Good

from

from the Reſtoration of it, that Earneſtneſs would never have continued, as it doth, to this Day.

Nor will our Compliance with their Requeſt be a Benefit only to Them, but to this Nation alſo. If They are diſhoneſt and profligate; every ſingle Perſon here, who hath Concerns with them, will be in Danger of ſuffering by it. If they conſume their Wealth and their Time in Vices and Follies; their Trade will be gained over, from Them and Us, by our Rivals and Adverſaries. And if the Ties of a Religion, binding Men ſo ſtrongly to *be ſubject for Conſcience Sake* *, are looſened from off their Minds, which may ſome Time or another need every Tie, that can keep them attached to us; it will much facilitate their becoming Adverſaries themſelves. And we ſhall well deſerve their revolting from Us, if we take no Care of their obeying God. But on the contrary, as Chriſtian Principles will teach them Dutifulneſs and Loyalty; ſo receiving from hence the Support of thoſe Principles, will recommend us to their Gratitude; hoping for the Continuance of that Support, will create ſome Dependence in point of Intereſt; and agreeing in the ſame Faith and Worſhip with us, will be an everlaſting Motive to civil Unity alſo.

But another common Benefit of propagating Chriſtianity in our Colonies is, that thus we

* Rom. xiii. 5.

ſhall

ſhall hinder Corruptions of Chriſtianity from prevailing there, and ſharing with Profaneneſs a divided Empire over the Land. If no authorized Teachers are ſent, ſome Inducement or another will raiſe voluntary ones from Time to Time: and very poſſibly the leſs reaſonable their Doctrine is, the more gladly it may be received. For if Sentiments of Religion, are not duly cultivated; as they quite wear out of ſome Minds, ſo in others they degenerate into Superſtition or Enthuſiaſm. And accordingly many pernicious Errors, beſides the above-mentioned capital one of Popery, took early Root in theſe Provinces; nor are they yet extirpated, perhaps in part newly revived: ſome, diſſolving the Obligations of moral Duties: ſome, deſtroying the inward Peace of very pious and good Perſons, and making Life gloomy and uncomfortable: ſome, leading Men to aſcribe every Folly or Wickedneſs, that poſſeſſes the Fancy, to Divine Inſpiration: ſome, inconſiſtent with our preſent happy Eſtabliſhment: and others, deſtructive of the Safety of all Governments whatever, by forbidding to contribute any kind of Aſſiſtance to the publick Defence againſt Enemies: on which Notion the Repreſentatives of the Province of *Penſylvania* have acted this laſt Summer *. Now let it only

* See a printed Collection of Meſſages, Anſwers, Addreſſes, &c. the Subſtance of which is as follows. The Quakers, *having applied themſelves with great Induſtry to obtain an uncommon Majority in the Aſſembly*, though *they are not above one third of the People*

only be considered, how fatal a more general Belief of some of these Doctrines must have been there at present; indeed how very unhappy the Belief of any of them must be at all times; and the Importance of supporting Instructors in true Religion, were it only for a standing Guard against the worldly Inconveniences of false Religion, will evidently appear to be very great.

People in Number, refused to make any *Provision of Necessaries for the Troops to be raised in that Province*, as being a Thing *repugnant to their Religious Principles*, though his Majesty had notified *under his Sign Manual*, that he expected it from them. Soon after this they adjourned for above five Weeks; *though the Governor made strong Instances to the contrary*, setting forth, *That as the new Levies were in want of every Thing, even Houses to cover their Heads, he was hourly apprehensive of their committing some Disorders.* And being called together again by him in about a Fortnight, instead of raising any Money, they made a Complaint, that many of their Servants had been inlisted; and demanded the Restitution of them. The Governor answered, that they might easily have prevented this Inconvenience, and might still easily remedy it, by Methods which he pointed out to them; that he had done what he could to relieve them, and would continue to do so; but that forcing out of his Majesty's Troops at once all the Servants in them, would be unreasonable and unjust, very detrimental to the Service, and very dangerous to the publick Peace. Yet notwithstanding these Representations, and though Mr. *Penn*, one of their Proprietors, many Merchants and other Inhabitants of *Philadelphia*, and the Council of the Province, concurred with the Governor, and pressed them earnestly to answer his Majesty's Expectations, they came at length to this Resolution only: *That* 3000 l. *of their current Money be paid for the King's Use*; *provided that all the Servants inlisted in the Province*, whom they had computed at 300, and valued at 10 l. each, *be first returned to their respective Masters, free of all Charges*; *and such Assurances given, as* three Persons, named in the Resolution, *should think fitting, that the said Servants are returned, and that no Servants be inlisted for the future.* These being the Conditions on which the Money was given, it will not be thought strange, that when the last Advices came from thence, no Part of it had been paid.

But

But let us now think, what Good muſt follow from extending this Inſtruction to the poor Negroes alſo. The Servitude and hard Labour, which they undergo, be it as juſtifiable as it can, ſurely requires, that we ſhould make them all the Amends in our Power: and the Danger, into which they have brought our Colonies more than once, demands the greateſt Care to compoſe and ſoften their vindictive and ſullen Spirits. Now there can be nothing contrived on Purpoſe, more likely to effect this, than Belief of the Goſpel: which not only forbids in general, both doing and *recompenſing Evil* *; but commands in particular *as many as are Servants under the Yoke, to count their Maſters worthy of all Honour* †, *and be ſubject to them with all Fear, not only to the good and gentle, but alſo to the froward; for this is thank-worthy, if a Man for Conſcience towards God endure Grief, ſuffering wrongfully* ‡: *to do Service with good Will, as to the Lord, and not to Men; knowing, that whatever Good any Man doth, the ſame he ſhall receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free* ‖. The Tendency of ſuch Doctrine muſt be, to make their Tempers milder, and their Lives happier. And no Imagination can be ſuggeſted to them, of any worldly Exemptions or Privileges ariſing from their Profeſſion of it. For as human Authority hath granted them none; ſo the Scripture, far from making any

* Rom. xii. 17. † 1 Tim. vi. 1. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 18, 19. ‖ Eph. vi. 7, 8.

Altera-

Alteration in Civil Rights, expreſly directs, that *every Man abide in the Condition wherein he is called*, with great Indifference of Mind concerning outward Circumſtances *: and the only Rule, which it preſcribes for Servants of the ſame Religion with their Maſters, is, *not to deſpiſe them becauſe they are Brethren; but do them Service the rather* †. Nor hath Experience at all ſhewn the Behaviour of ſuch, in the preſent Caſe, to be different from what Reaſon would lead us to expect. On the contrary, in a great Rebellion of the Negroes at *New York*, only two of thoſe who had received any Inſtruction, and only one who had been baptized, was ſo much as ſuſpected of being guilty; and he was afterwards acknowledged to be innocent: but the deepeſt in the Conſpiracy were the Slaves of thoſe Perſons, who had oppoſed the moſt warmly all Endeavours for their Converſion. We may therefore depend on it, that Succeſs in theſe Endeavours will both be a Security, and every Way an Advantage, to their Proprietors. And if it doth procure the poor Wretches themſelves a little more kind Uſage, they will then be fitter to receive it: and at preſent, as much, as can be ſafely allowed them, is but their Due. The Apoſtle's Injunction was made not only for Slaves, but for Heathen Slaves: *Maſters, give to your Servants that which is juſt and equal: knowing that ye alſo have a Maſter in Heaven* ‡: *neither is there Reſpect of Perſons*

* 1 Cor. vii. 20—24. † 1 Tim. vi. 2. ‡ Col. vi. 1.

with

with him *. And if their becoming Chriſtians will help, as it certainly will, to obtain them ſuch Treatment; putting together their Condition and their Numbers, there are but few Things, which, even on that Account, common Humanity more obliges us to attempt.

Then as to the Influence of Chriſtianity on the *Indians:* it muſt undoubtedly reſtrain their mutual Barbarities, which it doth not appear what elſe will, and diſpoſe them to a ſettled and orderly Life. By means of this, they will come to enjoy the Benefit of Agriculture, and of all the Arts that are uſeful in Society: they will of conſequence grow happier and more numerous; and as they will become at the ſame Time more harmleſs too; it would be both an immoral and a falſe Policy, to envy them theſe Advantages. They have yielded up to us a conſiderable Part of their Country: and it is but common Gratitude, to ſhew them the Way of living comfortably in the reſt. We have introduced amongſt them both Diſeaſes and Vices, which have deſtroyed great Numbers of them; ſurely it is fit, that we ſhould communicate ſomething to them, which will do them Good. It may be feared they are hitherto the worſe for their Knowledge of Us; but they will certainly be the better for the Knowledge of our Religion. And the more they are prejudiced againſt it by the Wickedneſs of its Profeſſors, the more need

* Epheſ. vi. 9.

there

there is to lay before them in a full Light the Excellency of its Precepts; and to convince them, that there are Perſons, who not only believe, but practiſe them. Nor ſhould it be forgotten, that every ſingle *Indian*, whom we make a Chriſtian, we make a Friend and Ally at the ſame Time; both againſt the remaining Heathen, and a much more dangerous Neighbour, from whoſe Inſtigations almoſt all that we have ſuffered by them is allowed to have come.

But the temporal Advantages of propagating Chriſtianity are infinitely the leaſt. If we allow but the Truth of natural Religion, we muſt admit the future, as well as preſent, Happineſs of Mankind to depend on preſerving and diffuſing the Knowledge of that Religion. And there is neither Inſtance nor Proſpect of either of theſe Things being attempted by any other Method, than that of preaching the Goſpel: of which the Doctrines and Duties of Nature make ſo large a Part. If therefore it be of Importance, that the People in our Colonies ſhould worſhip the Maker of Heaven and Earth, and believe Virtue to be his Law; that the *Negroes* and *Indians* ſhould *be turned from Idols, to ſerve the living and true God* *; and that all ſhould know, there will be a Recompence hereafter to the Juſt and to the Unjuſt: whoever deſerves the Name of Deiſt in a good Senſe, as it ſtands oppoſed to Atheiſt,

* 1 Theſſ. i. 9.

whoever is indeed an Enemy to Superſtition, and a Friend to Mankind, will rejoice to have that Faith carefully taught them, by which alone they will learn theſe momentous Truths; to have it *told among the Heathen, that the Lord is King, and that he ſhall judge the People righteouſly* *.

But if *the Goſpel of Chriſt*, beſides comprehending the Syſtem of Natural Religion, be, by Virtue of its own peculiar Doctrines, *the Power of God unto Salvation* †: then every poſſible Motive concurs, for being zealous in ſpreading it throughout the Earth. Revelation indeed neither obliges nor permits us to paſs a hard Sentence on thoſe, who have never had it propoſed with ſufficient Evidence. *To their own Maſter they ſtand or fall* ‡: and of them only, *to whom much is given, ſhall much be required* ‖. *For if there be firſt a willing Mind, it is accepted according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not* §. But ſtill, as *all Men have ſinned, and come ſhort of the Glory of God* **, and there is but one *Name under Heaven whereby they can be ſaved* ††; as Chriſtianity is inexpreſſibly more efficacious for the Reformation of Mankind, than unaſſiſted Reaſon; as our only Aſſurance, either of receiving a future Reward, or eſcaping future Puniſhment, muſt ariſe from Scripture;

* Pſal. xcvi. 10. † Rom. i. 16. ‡ Rom. xiv. 4.
‖ Luke xii. 48. § 2 Cor. viii. 12. ** Rom. iii. 23.
†† Acts iv. 12.

and

and we have no Intimation in it, of any Perſon's enjoying that *Life and Immortality, which Jeſus Chriſt hath brought to Light* *, but ſuch as believe in him: theſe Conſiderations, without limiting at all the free Mercies of God, cannot but ſhew us the great Superiority of our own Condition, and make us aſk, with great Solicitude, concerning others: *How then ſhall they believe in Him, of whom they have not heard? And how ſhall they hear, without a Preacher? And how ſhall they preach, except they be ſent* †? Our bleſſed Lord hath intruſted his Followers, to preſerve his Goſpel in Purity, where it is; and communicate it, where it is not. By their faithful Diſcharge of theſe Duties formerly, we ourſelves were *delivered from the Bondage of* Heatheniſm *into the glorious Liberty of the Children of God* ‡. It now belongs to Us, in our Turn, to *ſtrengthen our Brethren* ‖, and *call them that are afar off* §: and where ſhall we find more proper Objects of our Care and Zeal?

Perhaps it may be ſaid, They ought to maintain their own Teachers. But this cannot be expected from the Heathen, who are inſenſible of their Want of them: nor from thoſe of our own People, who are too like Heathen, and have not the Senſe of it which they ought. Such as have, do maintain their Teachers, where they are able. For there are very indi-

* 2 Tim. i. 10. † Rom. x. 14, 15. ‡ Rom. viii. 21.
‖ Luke xxii. 32. § Acts ii. 39.

gent Parts, as well as very opulent. Some whole Provinces have no Aſſiſtance at all from us. And in moſt, if not all Places, we are only joint Contributors. As ſoon as ever there is Room for it, they will be left to build by themſelves on the Foundation laid: and the Society will go on to new Work. Inquiries are conſtantly made, what each Congregation can do: and Miſſionaries have been withdrawn, till they will do it. For we are not only deſirous, but under a Neceſſity, of being as frugal as poſſible, by the daily Increaſe of Petitions for Help.

But ſome will object farther, that all the Aſſiſtance we can give Chriſtianity, is too much wanted in our own Country, to admit of any Schemes for propagating it in foreign ones. And would to God theſe Perſons would aſk themſelves, whether they indeed wiſh to remove the Objection, which they make; or only argue againſt this and that Way of encouraging Religion, to ſave the Expence of doing it in any Way. A true and judicious Friend will carefully avoid raiſing an Oppoſition between two Charities: which is a much ſurer Method of hurting the One, than ſerving the Other: whereas, with this Precaution, a firſt ſcarce ever ſuffers conſiderably, if at all, by ſetting up a ſecond; but Mens Hearts are enlarged to contribute to Both. Every ſingle Member of the *Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge* at home, was originally incorporated

rated into Ours for ſpreading it abroad. That Society is at this Day promoting the ſame Knowledge in the Eaſt, as well as here; whilſt we are doing it in the Weſt. Many of us belong to both: and promiſe ourſelves a larger Share of the Bleſſing of God in Each, for neglecting Neither. In theſe Nations great Proviſion is made already, and greater we hope will daily be made, for offering Salvation to Mankind. They who will reject it after all, muſt do ſo, and take the Conſequences. But let Us, *in nothing terrified by our Adverſaries, ſtrive together for the Faith of the Goſpel**: and not only ſuſtain a Defenſive War, but ſhew, that attacking the Dominions of our Lord and Maſter ſhall increaſe our Zeal to extend them. Our Colonies receive from hence a great deal of what is bad. We ſend them our Malefactors: we ſend them our immoral and irreligious Cuſtoms: we ſend them our infidel and profligate Books. Surely we ought to do ſome Good, where we do ſo much Harm. And conſider, To whom is it done? To our Countrymen, and Fellow-ſubjects: diſtant indeed from us in Situation, but cloſely connected by the ſtrongeſt Ties. To Them, to their Servants and Neighbours it is, that we are imparting Happineſs: and poſſibly ſecuring it to ourſelves, or our Poſterity, there, if God ſhould permit us at home to ſuffer what we deſerve.

* Phil. i. 27, 28.

Now this unqueſtionably right Deſign cannot be carried on, but under the Direction of a regular Society. For without it, ſmall Benefactions could not be applied at all: and large ones muſt be applied ſeparately, to great Diſadvantage: no uniform Influence could be preſerved, no ſettled Information had; nor any of that Experience gained, which reſults from long and extenſive Acquaintance with the State of Things. What ſort of Perſons they are who compoſe this Society, will appear from the printed Liſt. None of them receive any temporal Advantage from being Members of it. They are all obliged to ſubſcribe a yearly Contribution to the good Work, which they undertake. A conſiderable Number of the Chief of them conſtantly attend upon it. And they will admit with Pleaſure every ſerious Chriſtian, who offers himſelf, and is qualified to aſſiſt in it. Their ſtanding Rules are publickly known, allowed to be good, and faithfully obſerved. They give the World a yearly Account of their Succeſs, with an Abſtract of their Receipts and Diſburſements. They deliver yearly the Particulars of them to the Lord Chancellor and two Chief Juſtices. And they have proceeded from the Beginning to this Day with great Unanimity in all their Affairs.

It hath been pretended indeed, that immoral and negligent Men are employed as Miſſionaries. And to ſay that this hath never

once

once happened, would be going too far. But that it hath frequently happened, or ever for want of due Care, is utterly falſe. Strict Examination is made at firſt into the Characters of all that are offered; ſtrict Inquiry into their Behaviour afterwards: and exact Accounts required from them twice a Year, of what Duty they do, and what Progreſs they make. The moſt earneſt Requeſts, the moſt ſolemn Adjurations are ſent, that all, who can, would give any uſeful Intelligence relating to them; and great Regard is always paid to ſuch Intelligence: yet very few Complaints are brought in, either from good Will or bad. Too many, it muſt be owned, of deſperate Fortunes and Characters, who are or pretend to be in holy Orders, tranſport themſelves into *America*, and behave there as it may be expected they will. But we have no Concern with any, whoſe Names are not ſeen in the publick Liſt of Perſons receiving Salaries from us. And the larger the Number is of vicious Clergymen, who go thither of their own Accord; the more is the need of ſending as many worthy ones as poſſible, to correct their Influence.

Were there Room indeed for making larger Allowances, more Perſons of great Abilities might be had. Were there better Opportunities for a learned Education abroad, more of the Natives of our Colonies would be fitted for the Work: which they would undertake

with many Advantages above ſuch as go from hence. And had they Biſhops there, theſe Perſons might be ordained without the Inconveniencies of a long Voyage: Vacancies might be ſupplied in much leſs Time: the primitive and moſt uſeful Apppointment of Confirmation might be reſtored; and an orderly Diſcipline exerciſed in the Churches. Nor would ſuch an Eſtabliſhment encroach at all, either on Liberty of Conſcience, which ought ever to be ſacredly preſerved; or on the preſent civil Rights, either of the Governors or People in our Colonies. Nor would it bring their Dependence on *Great-Britain* into any Degree of that Danger, which ſome Perſons profeſs to apprehend ſo ſtrongly on this Occaſion, who would make no manner of Scruple about doing other Things much more likely to deſtroy it: who are not terrified in the leaſt, that ſuch Numbers there reject the Epiſcopal Order entirely: nor perhaps would be greatly alarmed, were ever ſo many to reject Religion itſelf: though evidently in Proportion as either is thrown off, all Dependence produced by it ceaſes of courſe. To this equally pious and harmleſs Deſign, two great Prelates *, now deceaſed, gave a thouſand Pounds each: and a Lady, incomparably more eminent for her Virtues than her Quality †, bequeathed the Sum of five hundred Pounds laſt Year to the

* Archbiſhop *Tenifon*, and Sir *Jonathan Trelawney*, Biſhop of *Winchester*.

† Lady *Elizabeth Haſtings*.

ſame

ſame Purpoſe: which God incline the Hearts of all, in whoſe Power it is, to promote as it deſerves! But in the mean Time, let it not be imagined, that the Difficulties, under which we labour, are too heavy to be overcome. Difficulties are Arguments for nothing, but more Diligence, and more Liberality. For if we ſtop, till we have every Thing that might be wiſhed, When ſhall we go on?

Another Objection to the Conduct of the Society is, that they have ſent Miſſionaries to ſome Places, in which there were already Chriſtian Aſſemblies eſtabliſhed and ſupported. But in one Sort of theſe Aſſemblies, there is no Chriſtian Miniſtry, no Celebration of the Sacraments of the Goſpel. In another, Infants are denied the Sacrament of Baptiſm. And in the leaſt exceptionable, there are ſeveral Things, in which the Conſciences of many, we apprehend with great Reaſon, cannot acquieſce; who were not therefore to be left deſtitute of publick Worſhip: eſpecially as our Charter was granted, in expreſs Terms, for *the Maintenance of an Orthodox Clergy in thoſe Parts*. And the Members of this Church, I am ſorry to ſay it, lying under peculiar Burdens in one conſiderable Province *, which other

* In *New England* They are rated to the Support of what the *Independents*, who are the greater Part of that People, call, though without Right, the Eſtabliſhed Church. And the Goods of many have been ſeized, or their Bodies impriſoned, for Non-payment. The *Anabaptiſts*, on their Petition, were exempted from

other Profeſſors of Chriſtianty do not, though equally Diſſenters from the Majority there; they ſeem of Right entitled to ſome peculiar Aſſiſtance in return. We have obtruded the Service of the Church of *England* no where: we have ſettled no Clergyman any where, without the Inhabitants requeſting it, and contributing to it: we have ſent no Succeſſor upon a Vacancy, without their renewing that Requeſt. But if the Proviſion, which we have made for the People of our own Communion, hath proved inſtrumental at the ſame Time to bring others over into it; we hope there is very far from being any Harm done. Indeed Unity of Profeſſion amongſt ourſelves, effected by Methods of Peace and Charity, will greatly recommend our Religion to the Infidels: who elſe may be tempted to continue as they are, for want of knowing with whom to join.

We acknowledge it, whoever is taught Chriſtianity by our Care, will be taught it as profeſſed in the Church eſtabliſhed here by Law. There can be no Teaching at all, but in ſome particular Form. We think our own the beſt. Every Body thinks it far from the worſt. At leaſt our Converts will have the Bible put into their Hands, to judge for

from paying this Rate; and the *Quakers*, without petitioning: but the Petition of the Members of our Church was rejected.

N. B. This Grievance hath been redreſſed, under the Adminiſtration of Governor *Shirley*, in the Province of *Maſſachuſets Bay*: and, I believe, ſince the Year 1752, in the Colony of *Connecticut* alſo.

Them-

Themſelves. And which is righter, that Heathens and Perſons of no Religion ſhould continue what they are, or become what we would make them? Our Society is by much the moſt conſiderable one for this Purpoſe. And were it now to be erected, inſtead of having ſubſiſted ſo long: not a ſingle Step could be taken on any other Footing than this; that the ſmaller Part of thoſe, who wiſhed well to it, muſt be concluded by the greater.

So good a Deſign therefore being ſo properly executed; the Expences, which muſt attend it, ought to be ſupplied. *The Lord hath ordained, that they who preach the Goſpel, ſhould live of the Goſpel* *. And there is the ſame Reaſon, the ſame Neceſſity indeed, that the Miſſionaries in *America* ſhould have due Proviſion made for them, as that the Apoſtles ſhould at firſt, or the Miniſters of our Pariſhes now. And if Perſons of Character, being at Liberty, as they are, to exerciſe their Function elſewhere, are willing to undertake ſuch an Employment as this, at ſuch a Diſtance, on ſo ſmall an Allowance as they receive from the Society: they ought ſurely to have it raiſed for them very chearfully, and *be counted worthy of double Honour* †, in the Senſe of Recompence as well as Eſteem, if it could be paid them.

* 1 Cor. ix. 14. † 1 Tim. v. 17.

But

But perhaps it will be ſaid, Supporting Deſigns of this Nature is the Clergy's Buſineſs: let Them take Care of it. And ſo, God be thanked, we do: and ſo, I hope in God, we ſhall, whether we are helped in it more or leſs; in ſuch manner, as both to keep Pace with the Willing, and make Amends for the Unwilling. We deſire not to boaſt, and we need not to be aſhamed, of the Proportion which we contribute. But we may notwithſtanding do very well to increaſe it. For there is ſo much expected of us, and we are ſo greatly concerned to anſwer every reaſonable Expectation to the utmoſt; that if any of our Order have omitted taking ſufficient Notice of a Charity ſo immediately related to their Profeſſion, it is their Duty on many Accounts, to make full Compenſation to it without Delay. It is indeed our Duty, on every Occaſion, at all Times, but eſpecially in an Age when no Part of our Conduct will be interpreted favourably, to avoid all Appearance, either of preferring *Riches in this World* before being *rich in good Works* *, or of *loving Pleaſures more than God* †. St. *Paul took Wages of* ſome *Churches to do* others *Service* ‡. Let Us, out of the Wages which We take, do all the Service we can to the Church of God; and *diſtribute* largely *to the Neceſſities of the Saints* ‖, particularly their ſpiritual ones.

* 1 Tim. vi. 17, 18. † 2 Tim. iii. 4. ‡ 2 Cor. xi. 8. ‖ Rom. xii. 13.

But

But is the Support of this Deſign incumbent on the Clergy alone? Did not the Laity originally maintain the Apoſtles in their Travels? And ought they not ſtill to be equally zealous, *that the Word of the Lord may have free Courſe, and be glorified*?* Do they not know, how very inconſiderable the Benefices of far the greateſt Part of the Clergy are; what Hoſpitality is required of the reſt of us; and how large Demands are continually made upon us for Charities of various Kinds: to the Poor of our Pariſhes and Neighbourhoods, of our Brethren, their Widows and Orphans; to every pious and compaſſionate Uſe, publick or private? And are they not ſenſible alſo, that were We ever ſo deficient, this excuſes not Them: that every Man's Duty is, not to guard againſt doing more Good than comes to his Share, but to do willingly what he can; and that each one's Reward ſhall be in Proportion to his Work?

Whoever therefore finds himſelf diſpoſed to make Objections, let him examine, what is at the Bottom of them: whether it be not really Diſregard to Religion, or Want of Humanity; ſome groundleſs Prejudice, or ſome wrong Attachment to Self-Intereſt or Self-Gratification. If ſo, let him firſt plant the Goſpel in his own Heart: and all his Pleas againſt contributing to the Propagation of it, will ſoon vaniſh.

* 2 Theſſ. iii. 1.

Every

Every Man's Charities indeed ought to be left to his own Choice. But ſo many, even of thoſe who are bountiful in other Ways, neglect pious Uſes almoſt entirely, that good Perſons have both Opportunity and Reaſon for allotting to Theſe a large Proportion of their Beneficence. And amongſt theſe, as That now under Conſideration is of too extenſive a Nature to be throughly comprehended by every one, and at too great a Diſtance to make any ſtrong Impreſſion on the Generality of the World; they, who do form juſt Conceptions of it, ſhould, in Proportion to the Smallneſs of their Number, be the more liberal to it: as in Truth there is Need. The only certain Income we have, is a Trifle: not ſixty Pounds a Year*. The voluntary Subſcriptions, though they are ten Times greater, are not a fifth Part of the annual Expence. Hitherto therefore almoſt all hath depended on occaſional Gifts: which, after ſinking much lower than they were formerly, for ſome few Years increaſed again. On this Encouragement, the Society, importuned continually for new Miſſionaries, with an Earneſtneſs which nothing but Neceſſity could juſtify reſiſting, made a great Addition to their Number. And had the Contributions of this laſt Year riſen much above the preceding ones, it had been but too eaſy to have diſpoſed of them all. But on the contrary, through one noble Benefaction, of a thouſand Pounds, hath been given †, to be

* Now, in 1765, not Seventy. † By Mr. *Batt* of *Hampſhire*.

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employed for the Converſion of the Negroes; yet thoſe to the other Parts of our Deſign have fallen very ſhort: and a heavy Debt hath been of conſequence incurred. This may poſſibly reduce us to aſk Aſſiſtance, in a Method, of which, though authorized, we have ſeldom made uſe: being deſirous, that *he who ſheweth Mercy*, might appear to do it *with Chearfulneſs* *, and not conſtrained by Solicitations. But in whatever manner Application is made to Perſons, we truſt the ſame God, who hath provided for us wonderfully thus long, will now alſo diſpoſe their Hearts to conſider, that on Them it depends, whether ſuch a Deſign, ſo far advanced, through ſo many Difficulties, ſhall be carried on ſtill, and gain Ground continually, as it eaſily may; or whether it ſhall fall back, and ſink into Nothing, with very little Hope of being ever revived: that he will move wiſe Men to think, what the publick Intereſt requires of them; and benevolent Perſons, to regard the private Happineſs of their Fellow-creatures: true Chriſtians, to ſupport and enlarge the Kingdom of their Maſter with Zeal; true Proteſtants, to ſilence effectually the Boaſts and Reproaches of the *Romaniſts* on this Head; and all true Friends of our Religious Eſtabliſhment, to endeavour, that it may gain as honourable a Pre-eminence as poſſible, over the reſt of the Reformed Churches, in ſo good a Work.

* Rom. xii. 8.

Perſons

Perſons in plentiful Circumſtances, and perhaps at a Loſs for Ways in which they may give Alms, will here find one undoubtedly proper Way. And Perſons in Arrear to Religion and Charity, have an excellent Opportunity offered them, of paying the Debt. They who plead the Multitude of other Expences, might, a very great Part of them, by withdrawing but a little of what they ought from their Luxury and Vanity, qualify themſelves for Liberalities, which will turn hereafter to a much better Account. And ſuch as make the Increaſe of Taxes their Excuſe, ought to conſider, that as Providence hath brought that Increaſe upon us, by permitting us to ſuffer ſo much from our Enemies, in that Part of the World, where we have done ſo little for God; eſpouſing His Cauſe is the likelieſt Method of deriving a Bleſſing on our Own; and if we neglect it, whatever may befall us there, we muſt impute to ourſelves. We enjoy very great Advantages from thence: the Government, large Revenues; the Nation in general, a moſt beneficial Trade; every one of us, ſomething or another, uſeful or agreeable in Life. It is therefore our common Concern, both to do Good where we have received it; and to do it in ſuch manner, as may beſt ſecure our continuing to receive it. But they more eſpecially, who are now raiſing Fortunes by Commerce with our *American* Settlements, or who poſſeſs acquired or hereditary Eſtates, of which that Commerce laid

the Foundation, they ſhould think often, how much hath accrued to them from the Produce of theſe Colonies, the Country of theſe *Indians*, the Labour of theſe Negroes; and reflect very ſeriouſly, what Returns, poſſibly Juſtice, at leaſt Gratitude, and in many Caſes Prudence alſo, as well as Piety, direct them to make.

Some perhaps may approve one Part of this Undertaking beyond the reſt: and whatever they give, will be applied, if they deſire it, to that alone. Some may be unwilling to let their Benefactions appear: and ſuch may with Eaſe tranſmit them privately: the Donation will be acknowledged, the Donor unknown. But though Charity given in ſecret, from a Principle of Humility, be laudable in the higheſt Degree; yet when the Motive is Fear of Ridicule or Cenſure from a profane Age, this argues a Weakneſs of Mind, very dangerous to thoſe who are influenced by it, and very prejudicial to Religion: which cannot have a more ſeaſonable Service done it, than if Perſons of Rank and Influence, all Perſons indeed, who inwardly wiſh well to it, would openly patronize the ſeveral Deſigns formed to promote it.

The Deſign now before us, both deſerves and requires a general Co-operation, to produce its complete Effect: that they who are able, ſhould contribute to it, in Proportion to

their Ability; and they who are not, ſpeak well of it, and pray for it: that we of the Society ſhould be vigilant and active, prudent and impartial in our Adminiſtration: that Perſons in Authority abroad ſhould countenance and protect the Work; for in their Power it is, to forward or obſtruct it very greatly: that the People in general there, ſhould not only be willing to let all under them and around them *partake of the Grace of Life* *, but earneſtly invite them to it, *with Meekneſs of Wiſdom*, and by the moſt prevalent of Arguments, *a good Converſation* †. But beyond the reſt it is neceſſary for every one concerned in the immediate Execution of the Deſign, always to remember, that bad as it is in other Teachers of the Goſpel to behave in a manner unworthy of their Profeſſion, it will be yet worſe in Them, if they take an uncommon Character upon themſelves, only to diſhonour it; and *compaſs Sea and Land* ‡, with no other Effect, than to make *God's Name be blaſphemed amongſt the Gentiles* ‖: that They ought with peculiar Diligence to *follow Righteouſneſs, Faith, Charity, Peace* §; *holding faſt the faithful Word, as they have been taught, that they may be able, by ſound Doctrine, both to exhort and convince the Gainſayers* **; that they ought to *be inſtant, in Seaſon, out of Seaſon; to watch, endure*

* 1 Pet. iii. 7. † James iii. 13. ‡ Matth. xxiii. 15.
‖ Rom. ii. 24. § 2 Tim. ii. 22. ** Tit. i. 9.

Afflic-

Afflictions, and make full Proof of their Miniſtry *, *ſhewing themſelves in all Things Patterns of good Works* †.

Theſe then are our ſeveral Duties; and great will be our Reward for performing them. Let us therefore, each in his Station, *ariſe and be doing: and the Lord be with us* ‡.

* 2 Tim. iv. 2, 5. † Tit. ii. 7. ‡ 1 Chron. xxii. 16.

SERMON VII.

Preached in the Pariſh-Church of *Chriſt-Church*, *London*, on *Thurſday*, *May* 5, 1743, being the Time of the Yearly Meeting of the Children educated in the Charity-Schools, in and about the Cities of *London* and *Weſtminſter*.

ROMANS XIV. 16.

Let not then your Good be evil ſpoken of.

AMONGST many Excellencies, which unite to recommend our holy Religion, there are few that ſhew its benevolent Spirit in a ſtronger Light, than its requiring us, not only to abſtain from every Thing ſinful ourſelves, but carefully to avoid giving any Occaſion of Sin to others *. If the moſt innocent Action, that we do, will be thought a wrong one by any of our Brethren; we are ſtrictly bound, either to omit it †, if we can without conſiderable Inconvenience; or at leaſt to guard and explain it, as well as the Nature of the Caſe will permit: that ſo we may

* Rom. xiv. † 1 Cor. viii.

neither

neither tempt him to cenſure us uncharitably, nor to imitate us againſt his Conſcience. The former of theſe is the Danger, which the Words the Text moſt naturally expreſs: and to keep clear of it, is a Matter of great Importance.

Attention to obviate Cenſures may often prevent Us from acting, as well as Others from judging, amiſs. And where we act ever ſo rightly, yet if we are ſuſpected of erring, though in Circumſtances only, and ſeem negligent of that Suſpicion; it may grieve good Perſons, and perhaps weaken their Union with us; it may entirely ſeparate from us the inconſiderate and wavering; it may give a handle to the Bad for great Triumph and Miſrepreſentation; and both incline them to grow ſtill worſe, and enable them to do ſtill more Harm. Whereas prudent Care, firſt not to deſerve Reproach, and then not to lie under it, may procure us Regard from Mankind, by ſhewing Regard to them; may ſecure the well-diſpoſed on our Side, and furniſh them with the Means of defending us; may convince even the Prejudiced of ſome of their Miſtakes, and moderate their Vehemence in the reſt. At leaſt, we ſhall thus exerciſe a true Chriſtian Temper, improve ourſelves, and be exemplary to others.

But though we are concerned to vindicate all our Actions from injurious Charges, yet our

virtuous Actions eſpecially. When Things merely lawful are condemned, the Damage may be ſmall: but if worthy Deeds are vilified, Religion ſuffers deeply. And therefore, as we are now aſſembled to patronize a Deſign, which we apprehend to be a very valuable one, but which ſome have oppoſed and decried, the Erecting of Schools for the Children of the Poor, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew,

I. That this is a *good* Work.

II. What are the right Methods, to prevent its *being evil ſpoken of.*

III. What Courſe we are to take, if that cannot be prevented entirely.

Little remains to be ſaid indeed upon any of theſe Points, which hath not been ſaid often already. But if Perſons will repeat Objections, the Anſwers muſt be repeated too. And the plaineſt Truths, as they cannot influence at all, if they are forgotten, ought to influence us the more, not the leſs, for being frequently inculcated.

I. *Firſt* then it muſt be ſhewn, that this Method of giving the Children of the Poor a Chriſtian Education, is a *good* Work.

Now if we believe Chriſtianity true, we muſt believe it is the Way to eternal Happi-

neſs,

neſs. And were we to doubt of its Truth, we muſt notwithſtanding ſee it is the Way to preſent Happineſs. For it confeſſedly teaches in the cleareſt Manner, and inforces by the ſtrongeſt Motives, every Thing conducive to private and publick Welfare: and nothing elſe doth ſo. Natural Religion, as diſtinct from Chriſtianity, whatever Zeal may be pretended for it, neither hath been, nor is likely to be, ſeriouſly propagated: nor is it capable of carrying in it the Direction, the Encouragement, or the Terror, that Revelation doth. Virtue, without Religion, will perpetually be modelled by Peoples Fancies, and overturned by their Paſſions and Intereſts, for want of the Hopes and Fears of Futurity to counterbalance them. And human Laws, the only Reſtraint beſides, extend but to a ſmall Part of our Behaviour: and without Principle, they will be faultily contrived, and remiſſly or partially executed: Men will elude them in ſome Caſes, break through them at all Adventures in others; and having once learnt to deſpiſe Death, as they well may if nothing follows it, will have little Fear of what the Magiſtrate can inflict. All Ages and Nations have found theſe Things true: they are viſibly ſo in our own, to an uncommon Degree: and Experience joins with Reaſon to acknowledge, that Scripture points out the only Remedy: *All thy Children ſhall be taught of God, and great ſhall be the Peace of thy Children**.

* Iſai. liv. 13.

If then the Belief of Chriſtianity be thus neceſſary, Inſtruction in it ought to be early. The abſolute Ignorance, in which we are born, and the Propenſity we manifeſt immediately, to receive Impreſſions from what we ſee and hear, are an evident Proof of our Maker's Deſign, that we ſhould be formed by Education into what we are to be. And had this never been neglected, Error and Wickedneſs had never prevailed. Now indeed, ſince they have, Inſtruction will in moſt Places, more or leſs, lead Children into what is wrong. But ſtill it is the ſureſt Method we can take, to preſerve them from it. Were their Friends to teach them nothing, would their own Paſſions, and the Companions they would chooſe, be better Tutors? Their Reaſon indeed poſſibly might: and very poſſibly might not. At leaſt it would come too late, and be minded too little, to be truſted alone. Where young Perſons are taught from the firſt ever ſo well, and governed ever ſo prudently, it doth not always ſucceed. But ſuch Care muſt afford vaſtly greater Hope, than if they are left to themſelves without any, till bad Notions and Cuſtoms have taken root, till their Appetites are grown vehement, and their Tempers ſtubborn; till they laugh at Advice, and diſdain Authority. If then we would prevent all the Miſery ſuch Wretches may ſuffer, all the Miſchief they may do, all the Burthens they may bring on Society; if we would make them uſeful to the World, and happy in

themſelves; the plain Rule is, *Train* them *up* when *Children in the Way they ſhould go; and* probably *when they are old, they will not depart from it* *.

But by whom ſhall this be done, in the Caſe of the Poor? Unqueſtionably it is the Duty of their Parents. But many of them are Orphans. Many have Parents, who teach, or allow them to be taught, all manner of Evil; and moſt of them have ſuch as want Leiſure, or Capacity, or Diligence, to teach them the Good, which they ought; and at the ſame Time are unable or unwilling to pay others for teaching them. Great Numbers of them indeed are removed early into Families of better Rank. But how very little Proſpect there is in general, that more Care will be taken of them there, than their neareſt Relations took at home, I need not ſay. Will then the publick Inſtruction of the Church ſuffice? But alas! what Multitudes of them are there, that ſeldom or never go thither? The Laws that require it, are not executed: their Parents have not uſed them to it: their Maſters are indifferent about it, or perhaps make it difficult to them: and what wonder, if in theſe Circumſtances the poor Creatures neglect it? Beſides, there is ſome Degree of previous Knowledge requiſite to their attending publick Worſhip to good Effect. And the Miniſter, were they always duly ſent to him,

* Prov. xxii. 6.

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cannot alone ground them ſufficiently in the firſt Elements of that Knowledge; nor in larger Pariſhes make any conſiderable Advance towards it.

What further Proviſion might be made in this important Affair, either by enacting new Laws, or enforcing the old ones, is not a Point to be conſidered here: but only, what can be attempted by private Zeal and Prudence; the Laws and the Execution of them continuing ſuch as they are, and probably will be.

Now as to Perſons in higher Circumſtances: they muſt and will be left to themſelves, to educate their Youth juſt as they pleaſe; and they, and we, muſt take the Conſequences. But the Poor are many of them deſirous to have theirs educated rightly. And moſt of them may be induced to it by thoſe additional Encouragements, of cloathing and fitting them for Buſineſs, which are ſingly very excellent Charities, and, joined with religious Inſtruction, make a very complete one. Surely there can be no Doubt then, whether a Method ſo beneficial every Way, to the Children, the Parents, the Publick, ſhould be joyfully embraced. The wiſeſt and beſt of antient Legiſlators and Philoſophers, have all preſcribed a ſtrict Education of Youth, as the Foundation of every Thing good. Both the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Inſtitutions abſolutely enjoin it. In Proteſtant Coun-

tries

tries abroad, Teachers are univerſally provided for the Children of the Poor; who are in moſt Places bound by Law to become their Scholars *. Our Governors at home, both in Church and State, with the whole Body of ſerious Perſons of all Denominations, have ſhewn their Approbation of this Deſign. The only Perſon, who hath attempted publickly to prove it hurtful, hath attempted, in the ſame Book, to prove *Vice a public Benefit* †. I know but one Author more of the leaſt Note, who hath declared againſt theſe Schools: and He fairly acknowledges, that, "under a pro-"per Regulation, ſomething like them may "be commendable ‡," though he was led, by unhappy Prejudices and falſe Reports, to inveigh with great Bitterneſs againſt the Conduct of them.

II. Let us therefore enquire, in the *ſecond* Place, what are the true Methods to prevent this *good* Work from *being evil ſpoken of*.

Now theſe in general muſt be, Giving no Occaſion for juſt Objections; and, Returning ſufficient Anſwers to unjuſt ones, Undoubtedly the former is the main Thing. For wrong Conduct neither can nor ought to be defended; and right Conduct will in a great Meaſure defend itſelf: yet not ſo entirely, but

* See the Dean of *Peterborough*'s Sermon at the Meeting of theſe Children, 1740, p. 23.

† *Fable of the Bees.* ‡ CATO's *Letters*, N° 133.

that

that a ſeaſonable Vindication may be neceſſary for the beſt Cauſe. I ſhall therefore endeavour to ſet forth jointly, What ought to be done; and, where any Accuſation worth Notice hath been brought, What is done, ſo far as I have been able to learn, in the Choice, the Management, and the Diſpoſal of theſe Children,

1, The Liberty of *chooſing* fit Objects for this Charity is a great Advantage, which Hoſpitals for Foundlings have not; and ſhould be uſed with great Uprightneſs and Diſcretion. If we admit thoſe, whoſe Parents or other near Friends are able and likely to give them a proper Education; we divert the Bounty, which we undertake to direct, from ſuch as need it: and there is but too much ground to apprehend, that ſome who have no Need may requeſt our Aſſiſtance. If we ſend in Children to be maintained at a common Charge, whom we ſhould elſe have brought up at our own: this is burthening the School to eaſe ourſelves; and poſſibly, receiving more from it, than we contribute to it. And if we allow the Recommendations of powerful Friends, or the Entreaties of Dependants, to engage us in undue Preferences: it is purchaſing Favour from the one, or the falſe Reputation of Good-nature from the other, at the Expence of our Character as faithful Stewards.

The next Conſideration, after the Neceſſities of the Children, ſhould be their Fitneſs: both of

of Mind, to take in the Inſtruction, which they are to have; and of Body, to go through the Buſineſs, for which they are deſigned: otherwiſe the Pains and Money, ſpent upon them, may be quite thrown away.

Where theſe Things are equal, or nearly ſo; the Offspring of induſtrious and good Perſons, ordinarily ſpeaking, ſhould be ſure of Admiſſion before others: both as the Proſpect of Succeſs with them is much fairer, and as their Parents may juſtly expect the Comfort of having this Diſtinction ſhewn them by the profeſſed Patrons of Religion and Virtue; which will alſo partake of the Encouragement and Countenance, that They receive. Yet if the Fund, intruſted with us, can be extended further, to the Families of negligent, or even groſsly wicked Creatures: as they certainly want Inſtruction more, ſo we ought not to deſpair of their improving by it. If they can be kept, for any conſiderable Time, ſeparate from their wretched Friends; though the Coſt will be greater, yet the Advantage is ſo viſible, both in Speculation and in Fact *, that very much Good might be expected from this Method, were it more practiſed. But even if they cannot be ſeparated, yet what they learn at School will be ſome Antidote againſt what they ſee at Home: beſides that bad Parents will often aſſiſt the Endeavours, that are uſed

* Particularly in the Girls School, belonging to the Pariſh of St. *James, Weſtminſter.*

to

to keep their Children from becoming like them; and now and then have been ſhamed and reformed by them, inſtead of corrupting them. This kind Proviſion may indeed make ſome Parents only the more idle and extravagant: and ſo may that of Parochial Relief, or of Hoſpitals for the Sick. But for the moſt Part, they who are thus worthleſs, would be equally ſo, if all theſe Benefactions were aboliſhed. The ſame ſort of Perſons neglected their Children, before Charity Schools were known, who do it now. And it is great Mercy to the poor young Creatures, to enable them to ſay: *When my Father and my Mother forſake me, the Lord taketh me up* *.

2. In the *Management* of theſe Children, as teaching them Religion is the chief Thing propoſed, ſo it ought to employ the chief Attention: which it may without Hindrance, indeed with Advantage, to the other Parts of their Education. In order to this End, getting by Heart their Catechiſm, and their Prayers, and ſelect Portions of Scripture, is a Step by no Means to be omitted or deſpiſed. For Experience hath taught the Need of fixing thus in their Memories at firſt, what their Underſtandings will afterwards ripen gradually to comprehend. But if this one Step be miſtaken for the Whole; they may be brought up in all the Form of Religion, with ſcarce any Meaning accompanying it. And though

* Pſal. xxvii. 12.

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very general and confuſed Sentiments of Piety and Duty may often be of great Uſe, both in directing and reſtraining Perſons: yet ſometimes it is poſſible they may do Harm; and more diſtinct ones cannot fail of being, in Proportion, more ſafe and beneficial. Their Teachers therefore ſhould very carefully explain to them, as ſoon and as clearly as they can, every Thing which they oblige them to repeat; and make proper Trials, from Time to Time, of their apprehending, as well as remembering, what they are taught: in which Branch of their Work they may be greatly aſſiſted, partly by ſome of the printed Expoſitions, with which they ſhould always be furniſhed; and partly by informing themſelves, what Methods are taken in the neighbouring Schools of beſt Repute. Another very advantageous and very pleaſing Way of increaſing their Acquaintance with Religion, would be, turning their Attention, as they read the Bible, to the more uſeful Parts of its Hiſtory, by familiar and ſhort Remarks upon them; ſuch as their Inſtructors can make, and They can enter into, without Difficulty. Nor would it be at all a hard Matter, by the Help of almoſt any one of the ſmall Pieces written of late in Defence of Chriſtianity, to give them ſo much Inſight into the Grounds and Evidences of it, as will furniſh them with much better Reaſons for believing, than they will ever have for diſbelieving it. And as this is, at all Times, a Piece of Juſtice due to reaſonable Creatures;

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ſo it is, at the preſent Time, peculiarly neceſſary to a moſt unhappy Degree.

The Knowledge, thus inſtilled, muſt be conſtantly applied to the producing of ſuitable Diſpoſitions. And above all, there muſt be diligently imprinted on their Hearts a deep Reverence of God, as the Almighty and all-ſeeing Ruler of the World; who hath given ſuch Laws to Men, as He knows are neceſſary for their Good; and will make us everlaſtingly happy or miſerable, as we obey or tranſgreſs them. This is a Principle, which will operate from the firſt, on every Capacity, in every Caſe: will make Duty appear important, and Sin dreadful: will teach them to feel the Inſufficiency of their natural Strength, and to rejoice moſt heartily in the Grace of the Goſpel; to be ſincere and earneſt in their Prayers, regular and watchful in their Lives, and through the whole of their Courſe mindful of the End *.

Conſtant Attendance on publick Worſhip is one ineſtimable Benefit, which this Education ſecures to Children. And to render it as uſeful to them as poſſible, they ſhould be diligently taught, and I doubt not but they are, to approach the Houſe of God with the utmoſt Seriouſneſs, to hearken reverently to his Word read and preached, and perform their Part of the Liturgy in ſuch a Manner, as may beſt en-

* See the Lord Biſhop of *Sodor* and *Man*'s Sermon, preached on the ſame Occaſion with this, in the Year 1724.

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gage their own Attention; and yet give others no Diſturbance, by the Noiſe of their Reſponſes, or the Loudneſs of their Singing: concerning which Particulars, expreſs Directions have been given by the Truſtees. The Indiſcretion of teaching them difficult and unuſual Tunes is, I hope, nearly corrected every where. But a reaſonable Degree of Skill in the common ones, will be a needful Support of the Harmony of the Congregation, a Means of familiarizing good Thoughts to their Minds, and of making Divine Service more cheerful and pleaſing to them: which they ſhould be engaged by every Motive to frequent, as long as they live: elſe all that they have been taught will ſoon wear out; and the Lord's Day become the moſt ruinous, inſtead of the moſt beneficial, Part of their Time.

It muſt be expected, that we ſhould recommend to theſe Children the Faith and Worſhip of our own Communion, as all other Chriſtians do: and teach them that Reſpect to the Church that they are Members of, and the Miniſters who officiate in it, which the Scripture * in very ſtrong Terms requires they ſhould have. But all this both may and ought to be done with ſuch Temper and Prudence, as not in the leaſt to ſerve the Purpoſes of Superſtition and Uncharitableneſs, or civil or religious Tyranny; but of true Piety and Virtue alone: which they will never learn from thoſe, of

* Matt. xviii. 17. 1 Theſſ. v. 12, 13. Heb. xiii. 17.

whom they think either ill or meanly. And whatever Deſigns of carrying Things further, have been either juſtly or unjuſtly ſuſpected, ſome Time ago, in ſome few Caſes; yet there doth not appear any Ground of Suſpicion remaining. And as I believe no Set of Clergy, ſince the World became Chriſtian, were ever ſo fully and generally convinced, as ours at preſent, of the Wickedneſs and Folly of making Attempts upon the Liberties of Mankind; ſo every obſerving Perſon muſt ſee, that this Danger is far from being an imminent, or an increaſing one. Tragical Fears, it muſt be owned, were entertained, or pretended, at firſt, of the immoderate Power, which the Inſtitution of theſe Schools would give us. But Time and Experience have thoroughly ſhewn, how very little Reaſon there was, on any ſuch Account, either for Us to be fond of the Scheme, or the Laity jealous of it. The Enemies of Religion indeed will of courſe exclaim againſt the Greatneſs of our Influence, even whilſt they deſpiſe us for the Smallneſs of it: but all others may ſurely ſee Cauſe to wiſh, that we had much more than we have, for good Purpoſes; and God forbid we ſhould either deſire or uſe any, to promote bad ones.

Next after the Duties, that we owe to our Maker, Chriſtianity requires Obedience to our earthly Governors. And the Government with which we are now bleſſed, is ſo neceſſary for the

the Preſervation of every Thing valuable to us, that all Perſons of all Ranks ſhould be habituated from their earlieſt Years to pray for it, and honour it, and live contentedly and thankfully under it: but thoſe of low Rank particularly, *to be quiet, and do their own Buſineſs* *; *not exerciſing themſelves in Matters too high for them* †. And if this Rule were either tranſgreſſed, or neglected, by the Directors or Teachers of our Charity Schools; it would be an inſuperable Objection, ſo long as it continued, againſt encouraging ſuch of them, as were thus fundamentally miſmanaged. But indeed there hath been found, on repeated Enquiry, very good Reaſon to be ſatisfied, that the Faults of this Kind, which there might be once, never reached far, and have been long ago reformed. The Imputation therefore now would be grievouſly unjuſt: but there cannot be too ſtrict a Caution to avoid all Appearance, not only of Diſloyalty, but of every Party Regard of every Sort, in the whole Conduct of this Deſign: for much of its Support, and much of its Benefit, abſolutely depends upon that one Thing.

Together with the Habits of Religion and Obedience to lawful Authority, theſe Children ſhould be taught every other, that is uſeful and good. Their Moral Behaviour, a Point of vaſtly more Conſequence than their Learning, ſhould be diligently watched, both in the

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 11. † Pſal. cxxxi. 1.

School, and as much as poſſible out of it too; for which Purpoſe they are diſtinguiſhed by a peculiar Dreſs: and their Parents ſhould be earneſtly warned, not to undo what their Inſtructors are doing. Ill-humour, Idleneſs, Indecency, Lying, Diſhoneſty, Profaneneſs, ſhould be ſeverely puniſhed as often as they are obſerved: and if any of them corrupts the reſt, or appears incorrigible himſelf, he ſhould be immediately diſmiſſed; and no falſe Tenderneſs, or mean-ſpirited Fear of diſobliging, ſhewn, either by Teachers or Truſtees. For maintaining the Credit of a School, is the ſure Way of providing for the Support of it.

But particularly Humility ſhould be inſtilled into them with ſingular Care. They ſhould underſtand, that the loweſt of thoſe, whom their own Parents maintain, are for that very Reaſon Their Superiors: and that no Education, given as an Alms, can be a Ground for thinking highly of themſelves. Their Uſage in all Reſpects ſhould be anſwerable to ſuch Leſſons. Cleanlineſs ſhould be required of them, as far as ever their Employments allow it: but no extraordinary Proviſion ſhould be made for it, nor the leaſt Affectation of Nicety tolerated in either Sex. Their Cloaths ſhould be no better, if ſo good, as they may hope to wear all the reſt of their Lives; no Gaiety of Colour, no trifling Ornaments permitted; nor any Diſtinction between them and other Children, in which they can poſſibly be tempted to

to take Pleaſure. If they are fed: their Food ſhould be of the coarſeſt Sort, and not more than enough. If they are lodged: it ſhould be in a manner, that is ſuitable to every Thing elſe. For, beſides that Frugality is a moſt important Branch of Faithfulneſs in the Management of Charities, *it is good that they ſhould bear the Yoke in their Youth* *; be inured to the Treatment they muſt expect to receive: and wrong-judged Indulgence is the greateſt Cruelty, that can be exerciſed towards them.

Theſe Things, with others to be mentioned in their due Places, require much Diligence and Prudence, but, if poſſible, yet more Piety and Serioufneſs, in their Maſters and Miſtreſſes. If they have the Religion and Morals of their Children at Heart; they will find Means, with moderate Abilities, and few and artleſs Words, to give them a ſtrong Tincture of both. But if they are lukewarm, and indifferent about the Matter; they will take little Pains, and be little minded; and nothing will be learnt, beyond a few Forms. Therefore in the Choice of them, not their Poverty, not the Recommendation of others, not our own Deſire of ſerving them, ſhould determine us: but merely their Fitneſs in theſe principal Points; for the Want of which, no Qualifications elſe, either natural or acquired, can ever compenſate. Nor is chooſing them diſcreetly by any

* Lam. iii. 27.

means ſufficient, without ſuperintending them continually afterwards; to examine what Progreſs is made under them; to excite or reſtrain, to praiſe or reprove, to ſupport or diſmiſs them, as their Behaviour ſhall give Cauſe.

The Miniſters of their ſeveral Pariſhes, I believe, do not fail, as Occaſion offers, to countenance and aſſiſt them, in the religious Part of their Work eſpecially. And would they beſtow pretty frequently ſome kind Advice both upon Them and their Scholars; the good Conſequences of it might reach further, than at the firſt View may appear. For if being taught their Duty makes theſe Children viſibly better; other Perſons, it may be hoped, will teach theirs alſo: but if it doth not, a haſty Concluſion will immediately be drawn by too many, that Religion doth Harm, or at leaſt no Good.

One great Help, both to the Underſtanding and Practiſing of Religion, is, being able to Read. The Will of God is contained in his written Word: and why have we it in our Mother Tongue, but that all may be acquainted with it? We are often reminded, that Perſons ought to judge for themſelves: this is qualifying them for it. By the Means of pious Books, which that excellent *Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge*, amongſt their many other good Works, have provided for the

the Poor at very cheap Rates, they who can read, may have at all Times plain and familiar Inſtructions and Warnings, concerning each Part of their Duty, which they can review at every leiſure Hour, dwell upon frequently, and fix in their Hearts. Many of them cannot attend on publick Service near ſo often as they would: reading will make them ſome Amends for this. Many grow inſenſibly negligent and thoughtleſs: reading will awaken them, *and ſtrengthen the Things that remain, and are ready to die* *. They may indeed learn Wickedneſs from Books: but they may alſo learn full as much of it without them, by the Diſcourſe which they hear every Day. And as good Books will be put into the Hands of theſe Children firſt, and teach them to abhor bad ones, and enable them to ſpend their Time agreeably and profitably alone, and bring them of conſequence neither to need nor love dangerous Company: there can be no Doubt in their Caſe, on which Side the Benefit lies. But, beſides religious Advantages, being able to read is of very great Uſe in all common Buſineſs: and ſcarce any Body hath Servants who are unable, but on one Occaſion or another he finds conſiderable Inconveniencies from it: which is likewiſe the Caſe of Writing and Accounts. If indeed the poorer Sort were to be carried on ſo far in the two laſt Accompliſhments, as to give them an Expectation of living by their Pen; it would

* Rev. iii. 2.

neither be Charity nor Prudence, but only diſtreſſing their Betters: amongſt whom there are Multitudes of Perſons thus qualified, ready at all Times for Employment. But ſome low Degree of Skill in this Way is already too common, either to make Them grow vain, or others murmur at them: and the more it approaches towards being univerſal, the ſmaller will be the Danger, and the greater the Benefit. In Country Villages indeed Writing may be leſs needful: and poſſibly may turn the Minds of the Children, or of their Parents for them, to ſome other Buſineſs than Huſbandry. And therefore in ſuch Places, it may perhaps be as well omitted; and I believe commonly is. But Reading muſt be ſerviceable in all Places. For however uſeleſs or hurtful to Perſons in low Life the higher kind of Improvements may be; which is a Point moſt abſurdly laboured in ſpeaking againſt Charity Schools, where no ſuch Things are taught: yet enabling the meaneſt People to carry on their Buſineſs more commodiouſly, and know their Duty more throughly, (the almoſt only Uſes they will ever find for their Learning, if religiouſly educated) muſt ſurely have a Tendency to make them better, not worſe. Ignorance and Stupidity, for which ſome, though unwilling to own it, have pleaded ſtrenuouſly on this Occaſion *, who on others accuſe the Clergy as the great Promoters of them, are

* See *An Eſſay on Charity and Charity Schools*, pag. 304, 353, 370.

neither

neither Virtues, nor Friends to Virtue. On the contrary, moſt of thoſe are abundantly *wiſe to do Evil, who to do Good have no Knowledge* *.

But ſtill, as Work is what all theſe Children are deſtined for, it ſhould be conſtantly had in view: and they ſhould enter upon it whilſt they are at School, if poſſible. It will make them uſeful at preſent, and both able and willing to work afterwards. It will put vain and idle Fancies out of their Heads; and ſhew all the World, what is really aimed at. It will ſilence the principal Objection of Enemies, and remove the only Scruple of many true Friends. Accordingly, for ſome Years paſt, it hath been ſtrongly inſiſted on by almoſt every Preacher upon the Subject; warmly recommended by the worthy Society beforementioned, who were the firſt Authors of this whole Deſign: and is, I doubt not, as earneſtly deſired by the Truſtees, as it can be by the Publick; whoſe Expectations are perfectly reaſonable, excepting that they are a little too impatient.

Many right and excellent Undertakings are ſurrounded with vaſtly more Difficulties in the Execution, than immediately ſhew themſelves. Truſtees of Leiſure and Activity to attempt ſuch a Change, and of Skill and Intereſt enough to conduct it with Succeſs, cannot be

* Jer. iv. 22.

had

had in an Inſtant for every School. Maſters and Miſtreſſes, very valuable in other Reſpects, may be unqualified in this, or too fully employed already to undertake more: adding ſupernumerary ones would be chargeable; and ſubſtituting better upon the Whole, may at preſent be impracticable. Doubts alſo may ariſe, on very juſt Grounds, what Work to try. Children are not fit for all Sorts: Manufactures proper for them are not ready at Hand every where: and ſetting up ſuch on purpoſe, as would require any conſiderable Number of them, might be an Expence and a Riſque very imprudent, on ſo uncertain a Fund as Charity. Beſides, where Manufactures, which might be ſuitable to them, are eſtabliſhed, the Workmen concerned in them can uſually ſupply them very fully with their own Children: and heavy Complaints would be made, and many Contributions withdrawn, if others interfered to take the Bread out of their Mouths. It is ſaid indeed, that Hands are wanting: but the Truth is, Employments are wanting in moſt Places, for theſe very young Creatures. Their Parents can make no Profit of them: elſe they certainly would, inſtead of ſending them to School. The Pariſh Workhouſes can few of them find any Work for the Children brought up in them, that turns to Account. And moſt unhappily, ſeveral of theſe Difficulties are the greateſt in this City: where yet the Number of thoſe, who want ſuch a Proviſion, is and muſt be the largeſt.

However, till ſuller Employment can be had for them, they are much better employed at School, than they would be elſe. How are other poor Children, whether maintained by their Parents or the publick Rates, ſpending their Time? Viſibly, the moſt Part of them, neither in doing nor learning any one Thing that is good; but as much of the contrary, as ever they will and can: whilſt theſe are kept, all of them in a conſiderable Degree, and ſuch as are lodged at their Schools, entirely, from bad Company and bad Habits; from which their Parents have not Leiſure to keep them, if they had always Inclination: they are accuſtomed to Application and Confinement, to Orderlineſs and Obedience; which will greatly prepare them for keeping cloſe to Work hereafter: they are bred up in the Precepts of honeſt Induſtry: they have it upon their Minds from the firſt, that they are to get their Living that Way, and no other; and they are at laſt all put out to it.

Surely theſe Conſiderations muſt have the Effect, on all thinking Perſons, of reſtraining their Cenſures, though by no means their Wiſhes. For it is both to be wiſhed moſt ardently, and endeavoured moſt heartily, that every Obſtacle to ſo excellent an Improvement, as that of introducing Work, may as ſoon as poſſible be every where overcome. This is not a Thing, which You, who are the Managers of theſe Charities, are driven into; and excuſing

excuſing yourſelves from it, as long as you can. You very well know, how important a Duty Induſtry is. You neither have, nor can have, any Inducement to diſcourage it in this Caſe; but all the Reaſon in the World to the contrary: and ſuch, as abſurdly clamour againſt you, would give a much better and very welcome Proof of their Zeal, if they would aſſiſt you, and ſhare the Difficulties of the Attempt with you. But, without waiting for what is ſo little to be expected, there are ſome Schools, where the Children do work: why may not their Methods and Regulations be inquired into, and imitated by others? All the new erected Schools in *Ireland* join Labour with Inſtruction: probably ſomething might be learnt from Them. Perſons of Experience in various Kinds of Buſineſs in this great City, could ſurely, ſome of them, ſuggeſt what at leaſt would deſerve Trial. For the Girls eſpecially one ſhould think Employment might be found; and for moſt of them, I believe, is: complete Employment, where they live together; and where they do not, a good deal; in making, for Inſtance, their own and others coarſe Cloaths. For as to fine Work of any Sort, it would be raiſing them above the Rank, for which they are intended; and might therefore be a worſe and more laſting Miſchief, than ſetting them to none. What either Sex can do, perhaps, will ſeldom turn to much Profit: but merely doing any Thing that tends to Uſefulneſs, will be ſo great an

Advantage to them of itſelf, that ſome Danger, nay ſome Certainty of Loſs by it at firſt, may very well be born for the ſake of it. Or to prevent this, if any Perſon would hire, or even accept of their Service, for one Part of the Day or Week; the Remainder of it might be very ſufficient for their other Inſtruction. Or whenever their Parents could keep them well employed, provided Aſſurance was given that they did ſo, That might be allowed: eſpecially in the Country; where, according to the different Seaſons of the Year, there are very buſy and very leiſure Times: and their Friends will be much the readier to ſend them at the latter, for being ſure of their Aſſiſtance at the former. Their Learning, it muſt be acknowledged, will go on the more ſlowly for it, and their Teachers will have more Trouble with them: but, ſooner or later, they will be taught as much as they need. And accordingly I ſee with great Pleaſure, that the printed Rules of the Truſtees have expreſsly provided, indeed for every Thing right and proper in the Management of their Truſt, that can well be thought of, but particularly for Leave to be given in this Caſe. And were there exact Accounts procured from every Part of the Nation, what Rules are obſerved in the ſeveral Schools, with the Reaſons of them: I am perſuaded it would be a Means of vindicating them in moſt Things, as well as directing them better in ſome. I ſhall only add further under this Head, that where Labour

is

is not made Part of their Buſineſs, it will be adviſable, to take the Children young and to keep them no longer, than till they have acquired ſome competent Degree of Knowledge and good Principles. For ſo they will have all that they can have: Work as ſoon as poſſible, and other Inſtruction in the mean while.

3. The Manner of *diſpoſing* of them, when they come to be diſmiſſed, is the next Point. And as all Education is for the ſake of what ſhall follow it, the Truſtees for them ſhould intereſt themſelves not a little in their future Courſe of Life; and, ſo far as they can, ſecure their Parents Conſent when they are admitted, to their being placed out properly.

The Profane or Vicious, if any ſuch be allowed to take them, will eſteem them the leſs, not the more, for a conſiderable Part of what they have learnt; and do nothing to preſerve the Impreſſions of it, perhaps a great deal to efface them: and then will throw the whole Blame of their ill Behaviour on the Management, under which they have been; and charge it with every Thing, that their own Imaginations can ſuggeſt. Good Perſons therefore ſhould always be ſought out for them to go to. And they ſhould be earneſtly entreated, to keep them in the Way into which they have been put: eſpecially to ſee, that they con-

conſtantly attend on the Lord's Days Service, and make a proper Uſe of their religious Books. For ſome ſuch ſhould always be given them at their leaving the School, with a ſolemn Charge concerning the main Branches of their Conduct.

But not only the Perſons, with whom they are placed, but the Employments, in which they are fixed, ſhould be well conſidered. Great Numbers of them have been ſent to Sea: and it is not the Fault of the Truſtees, but of the Parents, that more are not defending or enriching their Country on board our Ships. Of the reſt, thoſe who are bred in this Town moſtly become either Apprentices or Houſhold Servants: and, it ſeems, Objections are made againſt each Method of diſpoſing of them.

It hath been ſaid, that they are put to retailing Shopkeepers, or other eaſy Employments, unſuitable to their original Condition; and that more Money is required, and given with them, than with other Children: all which, I am aſſured, is abſolutely falſe in Fact. They are put, as they undoubtedly ought, to laborious working Trades, and no other: with many of them, no Money at all is given: with moſt of them, but forty Shillings: with ſome few, five Pounds: but more with none. And indeed it is evident, that the Friends of ſuch an Education will diſpoſe of them

them as cheap as they can; were it for this Reaſon only, that they may take in as many as they can.

Another Suggeſtion is, that they are put out to worthleſs Perſons, in bad Circumſtances, who take the Money, and then break. But neither of This do I find any Proof. However, though a groundleſs Aſſertion, it may furniſh an uſeful Warning.

But at leaſt, it is objected further, breeding ſo many of them to Trades occaſions a Scarcity of Servants. Now even in this Town, not two thirds of the Boys, nor much above one fourth of the Girls, have been put Apprentices at all: and a great Part of theſe were probably no other than Houſhold Servants, taken by Indenture for a Term of Years. What the Proportion hath been in the Country, doth not appear: but in all Likelihood it muſt have been very ſmall. Or were it otherwiſe, Diſproportions of this Nature will ſoon rectify themſelves. Where Apprentices or Journeymen are not wanted, and other Servants are, theſe Children will of courſe be ſent where the Demand is greateſt: nor can the Truſtees have either Inclination or Power to prevent it.

But whilſt one of the Writers againſt our Charity Schools accuſes them of leſſening the Number of Servants *, the other charges them

* Eſſay, &c. p. 346.

with

with increasing it *. Possibly the Meaning may be, that they increase the Number of the upper and idler Sort, and lessen that of the lower and more laborious. Now as to this: the Boys, when they come from School, are plainly incapable of the higher Services: nor are many of them taken, even for Footmen. And yet, what Plenty soever there is of Livery Servants, there is so loud a Complaint of the Want of sober and honest ones, that I apprehend it would be no Inconvenience, but a general Advantage, if more of these Children were put into that Station, in serious and regular Families: for in others they would have little Chance of doing Good, and a great one of being ruined. Then for the Girls: as they certainly ought not either to be raised into the easier Places, or qualified for them; since it would hurt both others who have a better Claim to them, and the Publick; so I cannot find that they are: but that low Business, with low Wages of fifty Shillings or three Pounds a Year at most, is what universally falls to their Share, till by a Course of Diligence and Faithfulness they can better their Condition; which surely then should not be envied them.

It hath been alledged indeed, that Persons are unwilling to take them for Servants. But, as I know this to be very false in some Places; so I hope, where it is true, it cannot be often

* Cato, p. 241.

on account of their Education. Some may want Servants of more Strength, than theſe young People can have at firſt: ſome may diſlike taking ſo unexperienced ones: ſome may think it beneath them, to have ſuch mean Creatures in their Houſes: and ſome may be unjuſtly prejudiced againſt them in other Reſpects, partly by falſe Repreſentations, and partly alſo by miſtaken Appearances. For there is a ſuperficial Pertneſs, very apt to ſpring up, at that Time of Life, amongſt Numbers bred together: which ought to be, and I hope is, carefully kept under; and yet may now and then give a little Offence. Beſides, all who are taught any Thing valuable, are doubtleſs in ſome Danger of eſteeming themſelves rather too highly upon it. But this can never be a Reaſon, why they ſhould be taught nothing valuable. And ſuch trifling Faults are ſo eaſily conquered in Children, and will be ſo amply recompenſed by ſubſtantial good Qualities, that prudent Perſons will certainly think them worth trying at leaſt. They will find them taught to their Hands thoſe good Principles, which elſe they muſt think it their own Duty to teach them, with no ſmall Pains. And they will find them reſtrained, as much as they could be, from the Vices, of which they would wiſh them not to be guilty, and in which others of their Rank are too commonly indulged. Still not all, it muſt be owned, prove well, either under this Sort of Management, or any other. Such as

do,

do, be they ever ſo many, have little or nothing ſaid of them: it is only what ought to be expected. Such as do not, occaſion abundance of Talk: and all the Errors, into which they run in ſpite of their Education, are pretended to flow from it. But ſo far as Enquiry hath hitherto been made, Multitudes have proved excellently good; few in Proportion remarkably bad; ſcarce any, perhaps none, have been convicted of Capital Crimes, excepting thoſe who had been expelled as incurable. And if more particular Enquiries were carried on in every School, as they are in ſome, concerning the Behaviour of each Child, that hath been put out either to Service or Apprenticeſhip: where they behave ill, it might give a good Inſight into the Cauſe, and ſhew how to remove it: but I am perſuaded, from what I have experienced, it would be generally found, that they behave well. To which perhaps it might add no deſpicable Incitement, if ſome little Reward were given to every one, who at the End of ſo many Years had deſerved a good Character. And I am told, there is a Legacy left to one School, appropriated to this Purpoſe.

But the chief Objection with many Perſons is, that this Method of Education takes off great Numbers from Huſbandry. And it muſt be allowed, that moſt of thoſe, who are bred up by Charity in or near theſe two Cities, are fixed in or near them afterwards. But is there

the leaſt Likelihood, that any of them would elſe have gone to Country Buſineſs? Do any of the other Children of the Poor go to it from hence? Did any of them before theſe Schools were erected? None at all. The Governors of one * School have for ſome Years advertiſed, that they were deſirous of ſending their Children to Huſbandry on very reaſonable Terms: and had they met with Encouragement, which they have not, others would have followed their Example. The Clergy have frequently in their Sermons exhorted to this Way of diſpoſing of them. The more than once mentioned *Society* have adviſed it continually for a long Time. And could any Perſon ſuggeſt the Means to ſo good an End, the Truſtees have given publick Aſſurance, that they would rejoice in it moſt ſincerely. In the mean while, they do all that they have the Power of doing: they place them in ſuch Employments, as they muſt have followed otherwiſe, if they followed any. For indeed many of them would only have been brought up to beg or ſteal: few would have been employed ſo ſoon; ſcarce any ſo well. As to the Children in Country Schools, their Number is ſo ſmall, conſidering the Extent through which they are diſperſed, that no general Inconvenience could as yet be ſenſibly perceived from it, even though a great Part of them were put out improperly. But I apprehend they are not. They are none of them removed hither:

* That of St. *Andrew's*, *Holborn*.

nor

nor apter than others, ſo far as I can hear, to come of their own Accord. Where Manufactures flouriſh, they are as uſeful in Them, as they could be in any Thing elſe: where there are none, or decaying ones only, they will go to Huſbandry of courſe.

It is ſaid indeed, that Hands are greatly wanted for Country Work. And at particular Seaſons they are: but whether ſo very much upon the Whole, as ſome think, may for ſeveral Reaſons be doubted. The Wages of Country Servants have certainly been much raiſed: but ſo have all Wages: perhaps nearly in the ſame Proportion. And as the Quantity of our Wealth, real or nominal, hath increaſed conſiderably within the laſt half Century; the Prices of the Things, for which we exchange it, and of Labour amongſt other Things, muſt have increaſed by Degrees, even had Labourers of each Kind been as numerous as ever: whereas probably they are much diminiſhed. But then the Diminution proceeds, not from theſe Schools, but from other Cauſes of a very different Nature *. Vaſt Multitudes of Men have been employed and loſt in our

* The Author of the *Eſſay*, &c. ſeems to be ſenſible of this, when he ſays, p. 351. that "if a thouſand Faults were to concur, before the Inconveniencies we labour under could be "produced, yet no Man can doubt, but Charity Schools are "acceſſary, or at leaſt more likely to increaſe than redreſs our "Complaints." This indeed is ſaying a great deal too much. But as others have ſaid much more, there is no Queſtion but he would alſo; unleſs he had felt that he could not, conſiſtently with Truth or Modeſty.

Armies and Fleets. Theſe two great Cities are increaſed beyond Meaſure, and exhauſt the reſt of the Nation. The Number of unneceſſary and uſeleſs Servants is multiplied exceſſively: who corrupt one another here, and their poor Neighbours when they go into the Country, and teach them a Fondneſs for the Pleaſures and Eaſe of the Town. Hither therefore they flock; ſet up for ſuch Places and ſuch Wages as they like, and behave as they think fit: ſupport themſelves by Combinations, when out of Place, as long as they can; and at laſt will take any Courſes, rather than wiſe ones. But indeed Luxury and Diſſoluteneſs are ſpread with Irreligion through our People in general, from the Higheſt to the Loweſt: they muſt all both appear and fare better than their Predeceſſors in the ſame Stations: they live, too many of them, in wicked and expenſive Lewdneſs, inſtead of honeſt Matrimony; by this Vice, and the dreadfully pernicious one, commonly joined with it, of drinking Spirituous Liquors, they enfeeble and deſtroy themſelves early, and produce no Increaſe. Theſe are the real Cauſes of the Complaint: and do they owe their Riſe to Charity Schools? So far from it, that in Truth there is double Occaſion for ſuch Schools, in Town and Country both, to preſerve, if it may be, ſome Part of our Poor from this dreadful Plague, that rages ſo fatally amongſt them.

But

But it is objected in the laſt Place; If this Method of Education hath ſo excellent a Tendency, how comes it to paſs, that inſtead of that mighty Reformation amongſt the common People, which the earlier Sermons on this Occaſion promiſed from it, they are thus confeſſedly grown worſe under the Uſe of it, than they were before? Now the Anſwer is very eaſy. No Proviſion of any Sort for the Benefit of Mankind ever did, or probably ever will, come up to the Expectations and Hopes, which good Perſons, laudably zealous for it, were willing to entertain. Yet this doth not prove all ſuch Proviſions to be uſeleſs or wrong. Beſides, it could not well be either foreſeen or ſuſpected, forty Years ago, how entirely Magiſtrates and Heads of Families would neglect the Religion and Morals of all under their Care, and with what enthuſiaſtick Vehemence others would ſet themſelves to extirpate Seriouſneſs and Order out of the World. No Wonder, if ſuch Remiſſneſs and ſuch Licentiouſneſs have done more Harm, than Charity Schools have done Good. The Number educated in them, is a very ſmall Part of the Poor of the Nation: and the Wickedneſs of the reſt corrupts too many of theſe. Still the right Principles, taught them, often preſerve them, and often bring them back, when nothing elſe would. And if this too frequently proves otherwiſe, it only ſhews the Proneneſs of our Nature to Sin, and the Neceſſity of our beſt Care. Had not [illegible] been taken, bad as we are, we had been [illegible] much

much worſe; and had more been taken, we might have been much better. But to charge the Degeneracy of a People on the very Thing, that doth ſo much to prevent it; and make it the Reaſon of their being Wicked, that ſome of them are trained up to be Pious and Virtuous; is a Degree of Abſurdity, which one ſcarce knows how to excuſe from wilful Miſrepreſentation.

III. I now proceed, as I am very ſenſible it is high Time, to conſider briefly, in the *third* Place, What Courſe we are to take, if neither prudent Management, nor rational Defences of the *good* Work that we are engaged in, can altogether prevent its *being evil ſpoken of*: which, though very hard, hath been hitherto, and we muſt expect will be, the Caſe.

Some will ſpeak ill of it from Hatred, others from Indifference, to Religion and Virtue. For though in Reaſon both Unbelievers and immoral Perſons ought to wiſh, that moſt others, eſpecially the Poor, might be ſober and honeſt, and for that Purpoſe religious; and therefore ought to encourage thoſe of them who are ſo, and ſuch Methods as would make the reſt of them ſo: yet Scripture * hath taught us to look for the contrary from them, and in Experience we find it. They would even ſeem to act from a kind of Principle in

* Amos v. 10. John xv. 19.—xvii. 14. 1 John iii. 12.

this

this Matter: and Perſons, who have no Fear in the leaſt of Society being hurt by Profaneneſs and Profligateneſs, affect prodigious Fears of its being hurt by Charity Schools: do nothing, ſay nothing, againſt other Evils; join in them, plead for them; but this one Danger awakens all their Publick Spirit: and they are as clear, that the Education of theſe poor Children is the Cauſe of almoſt every Thing they diſlike, as the Heathen *Romans* were, that all the Calamities which befel their Empire, proceeded from the Growth of Chriſtianity. Some again, without going ſo great Lengths, will not fail however to condemn what they muſt elſe contribute to ſupport. Others are ſo unhappily attentive to Party Conſiderations or Perſonal Prejudices, that if a Deſign, ever ſo valuable, comes from a wrong Quarter, inſtead of being ambitious to ſhare in the Merit and the Honour of it, they ſet themſelves immediately to depreciate it, and ſuggeſt miſchievous Intentions in it. And every one of theſe Motives will induce ſome to invent, and many more to magnify Faults: to dreſs out Facts with Circumſtances, that entirely alter the Nature of them; and talk vehemently about Things, which have been corrected long ago, as if they happened lately, and the ſame ill Management ſubſiſted ſtill. No Perſons indeed ſhould be charged with ſpeaking or acting from worſe Motives, than they do: for it is both injuring and exaſperating them.

But

But every Perſon ought conſcientiouſly to examine, what his own Motives are; and prudently to conſider, what thoſe of others may be; and neither be influenced by their Opinions, nor their Aſſertions, more than they deſerve. For not only falſe, but incredible and ridiculous Stories about theſe Schools, have been confidently averred, and incautiouſly believed.

Nor are bad People only, but very good ones ſometimes, grievouſly inclined to Partialities and hard Cenſures: too negligent of enquiring, too haſty in giving Credit. A ſmall, or but imagined Failure, in the Scheme, in the Execution, in the Succeſs, of a moſt uſeful Undertaking, ſhall cool their Friendſhip, or provoke their Enmity to it: and they ſtrangely forget, that a few Errors and Defects are no Reaſon for abandoning valuable Deſigns, but only for amending them; and that the Good ariſing from them, even if Amendments cannot be procured, may be vaſtly greater than the Harm. It is very afflicting, when Perſons, who mean well to Religion, will notwithſtanding take Part thus with ſuch as mean ill to it; and abet thoſe, who have no other View than to deſtroy, inſtead of favouring the Endeavours that are uſed to reform and improve. The Watchfulneſs of our worthy Dioceſan over the Management of this Charity, hath kept equal Pace with the Malice

of

of its forwardeſt Adverſaries*. And your Care, who are Truſtees, hath been applied without Intermiſſion to prevent or remedy, what others have only buſied themſelves to rail at. Yet the faithful Diligence ſhewn on the one Side, hath been ſuſpected and reproached: and the unrighteous Accuſations brought on the other, applauded and propagated.

But, unjuſt as this Treatment is, you muſt reſolve to bear it with all poſſible Temper and Compoſedneſs. For Perſons, who judge and behave very wrong in relation to theſe Schools, may yet be intitled to great Regard on other Accounts. And where Prejudice and a Kind of Faſhion run againſt any Thing, as they do amongſt too many in the preſent Caſe; angry Complaints, however well grounded, will only be deſpiſed, or excite a Return of more Anger: whereas mild Repreſentations will at leaſt mollify thoſe, whom they cannot bring over. Objections therefore, and even Invectives, ſhould be patiently heard: and Anſwers, though ſufficiently given already, repeated with Calmneſs. If real Faults are found, they ſhould be acknowledged: if proper Alterations are demanded, they ſhould be made. For though Innovations, which appear very plauſible, may be found, when examined, very dangerous; and therefore Love of Change is

* See the *Directions* given by the Lord Biſhop of *London* to the Maſters and Miſtreſſes of Charity Schools, in the Chapter-Houſe of St. *Paul*'s, *Nov.* 14, 1724.

by

by no means to be encouraged: yet Averſion to it may be carried to an Extreme alſo; and Perſons may both intend very well, and in moſt Things do very well, and yet material Points may have been either overlooked by them at firſt, or gradually forgotten afterwards. Each of you ſingly therefore ſhould always be ſolicitous to learn, both from Friends and Enemies, what will be conducive to your Deſign: and that excellent Rule, which you have ſo wiſely eſtabliſhed and ſo long obſerved, of ſtated Meetings to conſult together for the better Conduct of it, ſhould be ſtrictly kept up; and diligently applied, to propoſe modeſtly, and promote unanimouſly, whatever may contribute either to perfect or recommend it. Only you will remember, that the former ſhould be your chief Concern: and that the Reality, not the Name, of a Chriſtian and uſeful Education, is the Thing, which you are to have at Heart.

Such then is your Duty: and if you are conſcious of having taken due Pains to perform it, let who will cenſure or ridicule you, let who will grow cool or leave you, go on with Cheerfulneſs, and perſevere to the End. For, provided it be *a Zeal according to Knowledge* *, *it is good to be always zealouſly affected in a good Thing* †, and not to ſuffer our *Love to wax cold, becauſe Iniquity abounds* ‡. Deſerting ſuch a Work, after once engaging in it,

* Rom. x. 2. † Gal. iv. 18. ‡ Matth. xxiv. 12.

not

not only withdraws Countenance from it, but caſts an Imputation upon it. *Be not* therefore *overcome of Evil, but*, in this Senſe as well as others, *overcome Evil with Good* *. You have the Comfort of doing much Service to God and your Fellow-creatures: you have the Conſciouſneſs of having endeavoured to do more. You deſerve from all Perſons, and you will receive from all conſiderate Perſons, great Honour: and were it leſs, you would only be the ſurer, that you act from a right Principle, and ſhall obtain a large Reward; not only for all you have deſigned, but all you have born, as you ought; whether it be Reproach, or whether it be Diſappointment. But then let your whole Lives be ſuitable to this Part: be good Chriſtians in every Reſpect yourſelves, whilſt you profeſs to make others ſuch: elſe you will diſcredit your Undertaking before Men, and loſe your Recompence from God. For though *Charity ſhall cover the Multitude of Sins* †: yet this one Work is only a ſmall Branch of that extenſive Virtue; and were it the Whole, no wilful Tranſgreſſions, of which you do not ſo repent, as to forſake them, ſhall ever be hid by it.

But all, that the Directors of this Charity can do, will be much in vain, unleſs you, the Maſters and Miſtreſſes of the ſeveral Schools, perform your Share as you ought, in every Particular, which you can either ſuggeſt to your-

* Rom. xii. 21. † 1 Pet. iv. 8.

ſelves,

ſelves, or learn from others: unleſs you go through your whole Work with Diligence and Diſcretion, with Patience and Vigilance, with Impartiality and Diſintereſtedneſs; with Deference and Reſpect to thoſe who employ you, with Authority and yet Mildneſs towards thoſe, over whom you are placed; with a tender Concern for their temporal and eternal Happineſs, and a fearleſs Reſolution to oppoſe and overcome every Hindrance to either. The beſt Deſigns, without a ſuitable Execution of them, are likely to end in nothing, or worſe. Think then with yourſelves: will you occaſion all this Charity, and all theſe Objects of it, to be utterly loſt by your Fault? Or will you be the Authors of more Good to Them, and more Bleſſedneſs to your own Souls, than any Perſons of your Degree poſſibly can in any other Way? By your Endeavours and your Prayers you have the latter in your Power: and God incline your Hearts to it! The Impreſſions, that can be made from this Place at preſent on your poor Children, can be but ſmall, or at beſt ſhort-lived. To you therefore I leave it, to give them the deepeſt Senſe that you are able, of the unſpeakable Privilege of their Education, the dreadful Guilt of making a bad Uſe of it, the indiſpenſable Duty of doing Juſtice and Credit every Way to the Schools, to which they belong: and of recompenſing hereafter, as God ſhall enable them, the Benefit which they receive.

But

But I muſt not even yet conclude, till I have in one Word more reminded you all, who are here aſſembled, that without continual Help this excellent Undertaking cannot be ſupported; and that almoſt every one is capable of giving it Help, more or leſs, in ſome Way or another. They who have the Burthen of conducting it as Truſtees, all afford it the Aſſiſtance of their Purſes, as well as their Pains and Advice. And I hope ſuch of you, as are proper, will be ready, when Occaſion ſhall require, to ſhare in the ſame Truſt. For nothing is more abſolutely neceſſary to ſuch a Charity, than a conſtant Succeſſion of wiſe, and good, and reputable Managers. But if you cannot ſerve it this Way, ſerve it however in the much eaſier Way, of a cheerful Liberality. Its being a *good* Thing *evil ſpoken of*, obliges You, who are convinced it is unjuſtly ſo ſpoken of, both to patronize it more earneſtly, and contribute to it more bountifully. The trueſt Objects of Compaſſion upon Earth, are young Perſons left, uninſtructed and unreſtrained, to the Dangers of a corrupted Nature and a vicious World. And ſuch, without the timely Interpoſition of a Chriſtian Spirit, would theſe have been, whoſe Appearance now, not only gives your Eyes the Pleaſure of a beautiful and affecting Spectacle, but your Hearts the Joy of beholding at once, ſo many Thouſands of young Candidates for Uſefulneſs in this World, and endleſs Felicity in the next, as perhaps no Nation under the Sun beſides hath

ever

ever ſeen together. Let us comfort ourſelves in the Proſpect, and oppoſe it to the very gloomy ones, that we have around us. Amongſt the Poor our Religion firſt had its Riſe: and there at leaſt it may yet maintain its Ground, till it *ſhall again take Root downward, and bear Fruit upward* *, amongſt other Ranks of Men. We are following the original Plan of the Divine Wiſdom, in making Proviſion for revealing *thoſe Things to Babes*, which *the Wiſe and Prudent* in their own Eyes have *hid from* themſelves †. And may God, *out of the Mouths of* theſe *Babes and Sucklings* ‡, *ordain and perfect Praiſe* to his holy Name, and *Strength* to the Kingdom of his ever-bleſſed Son!

* Iſai. xxxvii. 31. † Matth. xi. 25. ‡ Pſal. viii. 2. Matth. xxi. 16.

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SERMON VIII.

Preached in the Pariſh-Church of St. *James*, *Weſtminſter*, *March* 11, 1749-50, on Occaſion of the Earthquake, *March* 8.

PSALM ii. 11.

Serve the Lord with Fear: and rejoice unto him with Reverence.

THE Paſſion of Fear is an extremely neceſſary one for all Creatures, whoſe Good or Evil depends on their Behaviour: for it prompts them inſtantly to avoid whatever would harm them: and accordingly God hath given it a ſtrong and deep Root in human Nature. But as our Frame is diſordered throughout, we are liable, in this Reſpect, as well as many more, now to exceed, now to be deficient: and fearing too little, on ſome Occaſions, is the Cauſe of our fearing, on others, much more, than elſe we ſhould need. Religion, if we permit it, will regulate all our inward Feelings to our preſent and eternal Advantage: and is particularly ſerviceable, not only in exciting, but directing, and moderating This. Without Religion, there may be end-

leſs Alarms. Were not the World governed by infinite Juſtice and Goodneſs; every Perſon, that would, might, in Multitudes of Caſes, do any Hurt to others with Impunity: and all Miſchief of all Kinds befall us, however innocent, ſingly or jointly, through the whole Courſe of Life, unalleviated by a Proſpect of Recompenſe after Death. Nay indeed, as nothing hinders, but that, if it were poſſible for us to exiſt without God here, it might be poſſible hereafter too: there could be no Certainty, that Death itſelf would end our Sufferings, or even would not increaſe them. But the Knowledge of a gracious and wiſe Providence entirely ſecures us, if we believe it as we ought, not only againſt all Imaginations of inexorable Fate and blind Chance, but all real Detriment from the worſt Efforts of Men or Devils. For *if God be for us, who can be againſt us* *? It is very true, Religion baniſhes theſe Objects of Apprehenſion by ſubſtituting in their Room another, unſpeakably more formidable than them all. *I ſay unto you, my Friends, be not afraid of them that kill the Body; and after that, have no more, that they can do. But I will forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear. Fear Him, which after he hath killed, hath Power to caſt into Hell: yea, I ſay unto you, Fear Him* †. And did not Reaſon afford us Hope; and Scripture, Aſſurance, of his accepting and rewarding us, on moſt equitable Terms: our Condition under the Divine

* Rom. viii. 31. † Luke xii. 4, 5.

Govern-

Government would be ſurrounded with incomparably greater Terrors, than any other poſſibly could. But ſince we know the Means of obtaining his Favour, in this Life and the next: if we will but uſe them conſcientiouſly, the Awe, which we cannot but feel, of an Almighty Arm, will be ſweetly mixed with faithful Truſt and thankful Love: and thoſe Things, which give others the moſt grievous Diſturbance, will not need to give Us the leaſt. *Fear ye not their Fear, neither be afraid: but ſanctify the Lord of Hoſts, and let Him be your Fear, and let Him be your Dread: and He ſhall be a Sanctuary* *. Firſt therefore learn to *ſerve the Lord with Fear:* and then you will be intitled to *rejoice unto him with Reverence.*

The Word of God, far from encouraging groundleſs and ſuperſtitious Horrors, cautions againſt them ſtrongly. In all Ages and Nations, Men have been terrified with Eclipſes of the Sun and Moon: in many, with Conjunctions, Oppoſitions and Aſpects of the Stars, and other celeſtial Appearances: Things altogether harmleſs. Therefore ſuch Frights the Prophet expreſly condemns. *Thus ſaith the Lord: Learn not the Way of the Heathen, and be not diſmayed at the Signs of Heaven, becauſe the Heathen are diſmayed at them: for the Cuſtoms of the People are vain* †. But whatſoever Things are real Inſtruments of our

* Iſ. viii. 12, 13, 14. † Jer. x. 2, 3.

Maker's Will, we are to consider as such; and respect all that is wrought by them, as proceeding from his Appointment. Were we sure of living ever so long on Earth; we are absolutely in his Hands all the Time we live; and ought to be deeply sensible, that our Happiness or Misery, even here, depends continually upon him. But he hath passed a Sentence of Death on us all, to be executed, at furthest in a few Years: and this furnishes a new Motive to Seriousness of Heart, which we should be recollecting daily and hourly. But instead of that, we contrive all possible Means never to think of it; and we succeed too well. Therefore to awaken us from this Lethargy, he hath ordained besides, that the whole of Life shall be full of Diseases and Accidents, to cut it short on a Sudden, often when there was least Cause to expect them: and here is a more pressing Call to *consider our latter End* *. But however surprising each of these may be, when it happens very near us; yet, as one or another of them happens pretty frequently; for that very Reason, though they ought to affect us the more, they scarce affect us at all. Therefore he also brings on, from Time to Time, the less common, and more widely destructive Events, of Wars and Pestilences. Of the former we have for several Years, not long past, had heavy Experience. And what we see and hear to this Day of the latter amongst our Cattle, tells us, one should

* Deut. xxxii. 29.

think, in a very intereſting Manner, to what we are ſubject ourſelves. But if all theſe Things fail of the good Effects, which he propoſes by them, as it is notorious they do with Us moſt lamentably: he hath in reſerve more alarming Methods of Admonition ſtill: one in particular, by which he ſhakes whole Cities, whole Countries and Nations, ſometimes to the Extent of many hundred Leagues at once, notwithſtanding the Intervention of large and deep Seas; and hath frequently taken away the Lives of thouſands in a Moment, by a Ruin, which no Wiſdom can foreſee, no Caution prevent, no Strength withſtand, no Art evade.

You have often read and heard of ſuch Threatnings and Devaſtations elſewhere: but did not look on them, as having the leaſt Relation to yourſelves. Poſſibly ſome of you imagined, that this Part of the World was exempt from them. But indeed your Anceſtors have felt them, many Times recorded in Hiſtory, probably many more. However, That, you might think, was long ago; and would be long enough, before it happened again. Yet not a few Perſons, now alive, remember one Earthquake in this City: and that you may not dream of being ſafer than they, Providence hath taken Care, that You ſhall feel another. Still, when you had eſcaped one Shock, perhaps you thought the Danger was over. Therefore you have felt a ſtronger.

And which of you can be ſure, that this will prove the laſt?

But you will ſay, Neither theſe nor the former have done any Harm: and therefore why ſhould we fear it from future ones? But let me tell you, Earthquakes have done Harm in this Kingdom, in this Town: overturned many private Houſes, many Churches, not without the Loſs of many Lives. But if that were otherwiſe, have we any Reaſon to doubt, but the Cauſes of Earthquakes are the ſame here, as in other Places? Why then may not the Effects be the ſame in our Days, though formerly they have been leſs? Who can look into the Bowels of the Earth and aſſign a Reaſon? Place the Cauſe, if you will, contrary, I think, to plain Evidence, not in the Earth, but the Air, what will you gain by it? Would not a very little more Force, nay a few Moments longer Continuance of the ſame Force, that ſhook our Houſes the other Morning, have buried many or moſt of us under them, whenceſoever it came? And if it had, let us aſk ourſelves, were we in due Readineſs to have appeared before God?

No longer than fifty-ſeven Years ago, when the laſt Earthquake before theſe was felt here; within a few Months of the ſame Time, near 2000 Perſons were deſtroyed in a Moment by one at *Jamaica*; and near 100,000 by another in *Sicily*. Not three Years and a half ago, in

in *Lima*, the principal City of *Peru*, containing 60,000 Inhabitants, 5,000 periſhed by an Earthquake in leſs than three Minutes, and but twenty-five Houſes were left ſtanding. At the Sea-port of *Callao*, belonging to it, not one Building, not one Ship eſcaped, and only 100 Inhabitants out of 7,000: nor were there fewer, than ſixty Shocks more, in thirty Days. Indeed at the ſame Place, they return generally about once a Month, and with great Violence once in a few Years. Ought the Conſideration of theſe Things to have no Effect upon us? Allowing them not to prove, that we ever ſhall be in ſo dreadful a Situation: yet they prove, that, for ought we know, we may: they ſhew, in a ſtrong Light, the Terrors of Divine Power; and ſhould remind us of all the other Reaſons, that we have, to ſtand in Awe of it, both in this World and a future one: of which we ought to think without ſuch Warnings; but if we can be thoughtleſs in the Midſt of them, we are void of all Excuſe. By taking Pains for it, we may bring ourſelves to imagine the Sufferings of others, no Concern of ours: and our own Danger, a very ſlight one. But do we reſolve then, that nothing ſhall move us, but what will deſtroy us? That we will not repent, unleſs we are attacked by a Judgment, that will leave Multitudes of us no Time to repent? You have, in the Revelation of St. *John*, this prophetick Deſcription: *And the ſame Hour there was a great Earthquake, and the tenth*

Part of the City fell; and in the Earthquake were ſlain of Men, ſeven thouſand: and the Remnant were affrighted, and gave Glory to the God of Heaven *. Had it not been much better, that all ſhould have been preſerved, by giving Glory to God in Time? And who can be certain, in ſuch a Caſe, that he may not be one amongſt thoſe, who periſh, however few?

But ſuppoſe we could be aſſured, that this Land of ours would for ever be exempted from the ſevere Viſitations, which ſo many others have long undergone, do ſtill, and are likely to undergo: who hath exempted us? *Who hath made us to differ* †? Do we owe Him nothing on that Account; that *the Lot is fallen unto us in ſo fair a Ground*, that *we have ſo goodly a Heritage* ‡? And ought ſuch mild Admonitions from God, as we have lately received, of what he could do, and doth not, to paſs by us unregarded? Do we *deſpiſe the Riches of his Goodneſs and Forbearance*, inſtead of *knowing, that it leads us to Repentance* ‖? The Countries, that ſuffer moſt, have no Right to complain. He hath doubtleſs wiſe, though unſearchable Reaſons, for ſubjecting them to the Calamities, from which he hath preſerved others: and he will ſufficiently diſtinguiſh hereafter the Good and the Bad, whom at any Time he involves in a com-

* Rev. xi. 13. † 1 Cor. iv. 7. ‡ Pſ. xvi. 7.
‖ Rom. ii. 4.

mon

mon Calamity here. Yet ſurely we are glad, every one of us, that we are not in their Condition: and whatever we have Cauſe to be glad of, we have Cauſe to be thankful for it, to the Author of all Good.

But perhaps you will ſay: "Theſe Things "are natural: and therefore what Founda- "tion is there for conſidering them in a reli- "gious Light?" But ſuppoſing they are, which is more than we know, is not the whole Frame of Things, of our Bodies and our Souls, natural? And are we therefore to conſider none of them in a religious Light? We are to conſider them all ſo. Life and Death are natural. Judgment, Heaven and Hell, are juſt as natural. For what is Nature? The Order eſtabliſhed by a wiſe and holy God. And muſt he not deſign, that we ſhould learn from every Part of it, eſpecially the moſt ſtriking Parts, to honour him, and *fear before the Lord**? He foreſaw from the Beginning, that conſtant and uniform Impreſſions on our Minds would be apt to grow faint and languid. Therefore he interwove, in his original Scheme, Incidents, that ſhould alarm us, from Time to Time. Is that Proviſion of His a Reaſon, why we ſhould not be alarmed?

Terror alone indeed is of no Uſe. And God forbid, that I ſhould endeavour to raiſe it in any of you, were nothing better likely to fol-

* Haggai i. 12.

low.

low. But, generally ſpeaking, it is the firſt, the ſtrongeſt Motive to Reformation. And though Dread of future Puniſhments ought to have, that of preſent often hath, the moſt powerful Influence in exciting Sentiments of Piety, and thence of Virtue; which are both of them practiſed afterwards from more ingenuous Principles. *With my Soul have I deſired thee in the Night; yea, with my Spirit within me will I ſeek thee early. For when thy Judgments are in the Earth, the Inhabitants of the World will learn Righteouſneſs* *. And this particular Judgment, of which we have had, in Compariſon, ſo gentle an Intimation, appears from Scripture to have been peculiarly intended and employed, through ſucceſſive Generations, to give Mankind a Senſe of Reverence and Duty towards Him, *who removeth the Mountains*, and *overturneth them in his Anger; who ſhaketh the Earth out of her Place, and the Pillars thereof tremble*†. When the Law was delivered at Mount *Sinai*, *the whole Mountain*, we read, *quaked greatly*‡. When *Corah* and his Company rebelled againſt the Lord; *the Ground that was under them clave aſunder, the Earth opened her Mouth, and ſwallowed them up: they went down alive into the Pit; and the Earth cloſed upon them, and they periſhed from among the Congregation*||. In the Days of *Saul*, when the Lord avenged *Iſrael* of the Philiſtines, *there was a trembling*

* Iſ. xxvi. 9. † Job ix. 5, 6. ‡ Exod. xix. 18.
|| Numb. xvi. 31, 32, 33.

in

in the Field; and the Earth quaked; it was a Trembling of God *. When he delivered *David* from the Hand of his Enemies, *the very Foundations of the Hills ſhook and were removed, becauſe he was wroth* †. When his own People provoked him to Diſpleaſure, his Threatning in *Iſaiah* is: *Thou ſhalt be viſited of the Lord of Hoſts with Thunder, and with Earthquakes, and great Noiſe, with Storm and Tempeſt* ‡. Sometimes indeed Expreſſions, like theſe, may ſignify only Diſorders and Commotions in Kingdoms and States, ſuch as we experienced not many Years ago, and had Reaſon to pray with the Pſalmiſt: *O God, thou haſt caſt us off, thou haſt ſcattered us, thou haſt been diſpleaſed: O turn thyſelf to us again. Thou haſt made the Earth to tremble: heal the Breaches thereof, for it ſhaketh* ||. But there was in *Iſaiah*'s Age a literal Earthquake, ſo conſiderable, that we find it ſerved afterwards, both for a Date, to mark Time §, and, even at the Diſtance of two hundred Years, for a proverbial Deſcription of Terror: *Ye ſhall flee, like as ye fled from before the Earthquake, in the Days of Uzziah, King of Judah* **. Again, *Jeremiah* ſets forth the Wickedneſs of the *Jewiſh* Nation, too like our own, and its Conſequences, thus: *My People is fooliſh, they have not known me: they are wiſe to do Evil, but to do Good they have no Knowledge. I beheld the Mountains, and lo, they trembled; and*

* 1 Sam. xiv. 15. † Pſ. xviii. 7. ‡ Iſ. xxix. 6.
|| Pſ. lx. 1, 2. § Amos i. 1. ** Zech. xiv. 5.

all

all the Hills moved lightly. I beheld, and lo, there was no Man: the fruitful Place was a Wilderneſs, and all the Cities thereof were broken down at the Preſence of the Lord, and by his fierce Anger *. Once more, God is introduced in the Prophet *Ezekiel*, uſing theſe Words: *In my Jealouſy, and the Fire of my Wrath, have I ſpoken: ſurely in that Day there ſhall be a great Shaking in the Land of Iſrael: ſo that the Fiſhes of the Sea, the Fowls of the Heaven, the Beaſts of the Field, and all the Men that are upon the Face of the Earth, ſhall ſhake at my Preſence: and the Mountains ſhall be thrown down, and the ſteep Places fall, and every Wall ſhall fall to the Ground: thus will I magnify myſelf in the Eyes of many Nations; and they ſhall know, that I am the Lord* †.

Nor doth the Old Teſtament only give us theſe awful Ideas; but in the New, no leſs than three of the four Evangeliſts record our Saviour to have foretold, that, before his coming to Judgment, *Nation ſhall riſe againſt Nation, and Kingdom againſt Kingdom, and great Earthquakes ſhall be in divers Places, and Famines and Peſtilences; and fearful Sights and great Signs ſhall there be from Heaven: all theſe are the Beginning of Sorrows* ‡. Now moſt of theſe, it muſt be owned, we have ſeen and felt. Yet I am far from concluding,

* Jer. iv. 22—26. † Ezek. xxxviii. 19, 20, 23.
‡ Matth. xxiv. 7, 8. Mark xiii 8. Luke xxi. 11.

and

and would counsel others not to be rash in concluding, any thing in relation to *the Times and Seasons, which the Father hath put in his own Power* *. But we are authorised to conclude, that such Visitations may be Tokens of wonderful Changes, in the natural, in the civil World; as indeed the Book of *Revelation* affords Ground to believe, that, sooner or later, they will: describing many grand Periods of Time, as introduced by these Fore-runners. Or however that be, we cannot err in concluding, that a *God so great in Counsel and mighty in Work*, must have *his Eyes open on all the Ways of the Sons of Men, to give every one according to the Fruit of his Doings* †. Whether at the present Time, whether in the present Life, appears not yet. And I would not terrify the worst Sinner among you, beyond Reason. Possibly we may feel no more of these Shocks. Possibly no Damage may attend them, if we do. But is Possibility, is Probability, in a Matter so totally out of Sight, firm Ground enough for you to risque your Souls upon? Even were it Certainty, hath God no other Means, than Earthquakes, to deal with Men as they deserve? Or is not every Part of the Creation ready to execute his Vengeance, whenever he bids it? Surely then you should have immediate Recourse to the Scripture Remedy, the only infallible one, against this and all Dangers, *stand in Awe, and sin not* ‡.

* Acts i. 7. † Jer. xxxii. 19. ‡ Ps. iv. 4.

But

But perhaps you will object: "We are not "convinced that our Danger, be there ever "so much, proceeds from Sin. We are not "greater Sinners, than others: they that suf- "fer most by sudden Strokes, are not greater: "our Saviour hath told us, that they are "not *." But he said it of some only, not of all: and to what End did he say it of those? To make Men thoughtless and careless about themselves? No: entirely to make them charitable in their Judgments about their Brethren. On what Foundation then do we of this Nation, this City, say, we are not worse than others? I am sensible, the Countries around us are very wicked. And it might be as fruitless, as it would be a melancholy Employment, to examine, which are worse, we or they. Yet surely our Luxury and Extravagance, our Debauchery and Intemperance, our Madness for Pleasure from the Highest to the Lowest, our Selfishness and profligate Corruption, our uncharitable Divisions, alas, our many other Sins that might be named, are not easily parallelled any where else. But supposing them to equal us in this horrid Competition: do they sin as openly, as avowedly as we, *glorying in their Shame* †? Are they unpunished, unrestrained, I had almost said indulged, as here? I conceive not. Or if they were as boldly and securely vicious in common Life: are they as regardless too of Him that made them? I believe no one Nation in the Christian

* Luke xiii. 2, &c. † Phil. iii. 19.

World

World is, or ever was. Many Individuals may: but is the Generality, the Bulk of High and Low, ſo profane any where; ſo contemptuouſly negligent of God, and in Conſequence of that, ſo utterly deſtitute of all Proſpect and all Principle of Amendment? Or admitting even this: yet, in many other Nations, ill-grounded, ſuperſtitious, unworthy Opinions make up a conſiderable Part of their religious Belief: on which Account, it is more excuſable, if ſome are tempted to deſpiſe the whole; while others rely on empty Forms, or impious Obſervances, even to appeaſe God on ſuch Occaſions, as the preſent. But You have a rational and moral Religion, with plain Inſtructions in it, and home Exhortations to live ſuitably to it, preſſed upon you continually: and you *love Darkneſs rather than Light, becauſe your Deeds are evil**. Nay, more than a few, not content to diſobey it, ridicule it, inveigh againſt it, teach others to do ſo too: ſome, in mere wanton Gaiety; others, with a Zeal quite enthuſiaſtick. And for what End? Have they a Syſtem of Doctrines and Precepts to ſet up, more honourable to the Supreme Being, more beneficial to human Society, better fitted to enlighten the Underſtanding, to dignify the Heart? And is it to eſtabliſh this, that they depreciate Chriſtianity? No: however highly and extravagantly they ſome of them, now and then, affect to talk of natural Religion: yet in Fact, none of

* John iv. 19.

them, ſo far as appears, either practiſe or ſtatedly profeſs it: but they live *without God, and* die without *Hope* *. Nor have we only our Means of Knowledge, but our Liberty, our Plenty, our numberleſs Mercies of every Kind, to aggravate our Tranſgreſſions. And ſtill can we plead, that we are no worſe than others? Or if we could, what Comfort is there in that, if we are bad enough to deſerve God's Indignation; and growing yearly and daily to deſerve a higher Degree of it; abounding more and more in our old Vices, and adding new and unnatural ones to them? Doth our Saviour ſay, that ſuch, as can flatter themſelves they are not greater Sinners than others, need not be afraid? Quite the contrary, he ſaith, *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh* †. And, I beg you obſerve, the general Terror of that Saying hath now been particularly pointed towards this City, the Head-quarters and Example of Wickedneſs to the whole Iſland. This very Place hath been the Center, both of the firſt and the ſecond Shock: and they have extended but few Miles round it. Doth not that look very like an eſpecial Denunciation againſt us? And ſhould it not incline us to take the Prophet's Direction: *The Voice of the Lord crieth unto the City: and the Man of Wiſdom ſhall ſee thy Name: hear ye the Rod, and who hath appointed it* ‡.

* Eph. ii. 12. † Luke xiii. 3. ‡ Mic. vi. 9.

Some,

Some, I am told, have reſolved to fly away from hence upon it: and then imagine, they ſhall be out of all Hazard. But do you hope to fly from God? Fly from your Iniquities to God, if you would be ſafe. Other Precautions will avail you little. You had one Alarm a Month ago. Have you left off a Sin or a Folly ſince; done a Deed of Charity, or made a hearty Prayer the more for it? The publick Appearance of Things, I am ſure, hath been almoſt in all Reſpects the ſame: and in very many, ſuch as it ought by no Means to be. You have now had a ſecond and more terrifying Admonition. Hath even that brought you to any determinate good Reſolutions? If not, what do you think will? And what muſt become of you, if nothing do? Miſtake me not to mean, that this one Fright ſhould have more Effect upon you ſingly, than all the ſtanding Motives to Reformation put together. But ſtill, when it hath peculiarly awakened you, and revived the Impreſſions of them all on your Minds: if you ſuffer them to wear out again, and relapſe into your former Inconſiderateneſs; you will be too likely to ſleep on, till your final Ruin overtakes you. This Warning was deſigned for a ſignal Mercy to you. If you ſlight it; what can you expect, but to be left for the future to the Hardneſs of your own Hearts? Even ſhould more of the ſame Kind follow, it is moſt likely, that you will grow accuſtomed to them; and like thouſands of poor Wretches abroad, purſue

your Sins fearleſsly, with all the Elements, in their Turn, threatning from Time to Time immediate Perdition to you.

But, it may be, more than a few of you have felt no ſmall Convictions for ſome Days paſt: only you dare not expreſs them, either in Words or Behaviour, becauſe the reſt of the World would deſpiſe you. Yet perhaps, all the while, many of Them are under juſt the ſame Difficulty. You are afraid of Their Contempt; They are afraid of Yours: and would you, on both Sides, diſcover your Sentiments, you would ſupport one another in what is Right, inſtead of awing one another into what is Wrong. But were you to ſtand ſingle: are you to ſtifle and belie your Fear of God, for Fear of Man? Remember what our Lord and Maſter hath declared to thoſe, who *are aſhamed of Him and His Words, in a ſinful and adulterous Generation**. Very probably, in the Days of *Noah*, in thoſe before the Overthrow of *Sodom*, there were Perſons, diſturbed not a little within, at the Lives they led, and the Threatnings they heard. But ſtill, they knew not how to do otherwiſe than all around them did. So they went on with the Crowd: *they eat, they drank, they planted, they builded, they bought, they ſold, they married, they were given in Marriage; and knew not, till the Flood came, and took them away*; till *it rained*

* Mark viii. 38.

Fire

Fire and Brimſtone from Heaven, and deſtroyed them all *.

But you will ſay, "Are we then, at ſuch "Times as theſe, to lay aſide the common "Buſineſs and Offices of Life?" On no Account. Lay them aſide always on this Day, as much as you can. But on others, it is not following them, it is not attending to them diligently, the far greateſt Part of your Time; but attending to them ſo, as to neglect or break through higher Obligations, that is the Sin. The proper Employments of each Perſon's Station are Duties, to which God hath called him. But they are to be done from an inward Principle of Submiſſion to his Will, with a juſt Senſe of the Vanity of this World, of the Importance of the next; and with a ſerious Care, *ſo to paſs through Things temporal, that we finally loſe not the Things eternal* †.

"But if Buſineſs be allowable, are not Di-"verſions too?" With what Intent do you aſk this? Is it not indeed, that you may exclaim againſt your Teachers, it may be your Religion alſo, as unreaſonably rigid, if we anſwer one Way; and pretend, that we approve of your going on juſt as you do, if we anſwer the other Way? Come with a better Meaning, and aſk; and you ſhall have Satisfaction. But you may have it now. We dare not take

* Matth. xxiv. 38, 39. Luke xvii. 27, 28, 29. † Collect, 4th Sunday after Trinity.

upon us to ſay, that all Amuſements are unlawful, to all Perſons, at all Times. We believe, they are often innocent, ſometimes uſeful and requiſite. But we muſt ſay; and would to God the People of this Land would hear us, for they have great Need; that living to them, and doting on them, in the Manner now commonly practiſed, is a hainous, crying, pernicious Sin. Fortunes are impaired and ruined; Creditors poſtponed and defrauded; Healths worn out, and Lives thrown away; Children taught nothing that they ought, and initiated early into every Thing that they ought not; family, private, publick Affairs, diſregarded; Modeſty undermined, and common Honeſty put to Trials, which often get the better of it: and all by the Means of ſuch a mad Purſuit of Pleaſure and Entertainment, of every Kind, real or imaginary, through almoſt every waking Hour, as was formerly unknown here; but hath been of late Years continually increaſing; and is, if there be poſſible Room for it, increaſing ſtill; and ſpreading wider, amongſt all Ranks of People, in Defiance to Religion, to Reaſon, to Law: even they who make the Laws, they who ſhould execute them, they who ſhould ſee that their Inferiors execute them, joining openly in the Violation of them, and ſo inviting all around them to do the ſame.

But could all theſe Miſchiefs be avoided in ſuch a Courſe of Life: yet is it nothing, that

your

your Time, your Thoughts, your Souls are filled with Trifles and Follies; that you are engaged in them too late over Night, to attend here the next Morning on the Worſhip and Inſtruction, which your Maker hath appointed: that ſuch Multitudes, inſtead of ſo important a Work, ſpend the former Part of this holy Day in needleſs Viſitings and Airings, idle Excurſions and Parties; and not a few, the latter Part in Debauchery or Gaming; that you lay aſide, it may be feared entirely, the moſt improving Duties of Self-inſpection and private Prayer; forget God, and give yourſelves up to the World: that you cling to theſe Vanities, even at the Age when they become you the worſt, till you drop into Eternity, with your Heads and your Hearts full of nothing elſe: and yet on the Merit of this wiſe Conduct, apprehend yourſelves intitled to ſcorn, inſtead of honouring, thoſe who act on other Principles?

If you cannot uſe Diverſions, without running into ſuch Lengths, indeed without Danger of coming in Sight of them; you are bound, as you value your Salvation, not to uſe them at all. And though you can uſe them ever ſo ſafely; it will both be pious, prudent and charitable, to abſtain from all of them often, and from ſome of them perhaps altogether; were it only to guard others, to whom they may be leſs ſafe; and to ſhew the World, what it ſeems to have no remaining

Notion of, that Life may be ſupported, may be enjoyed, without them. The preſent Seaſon of Lent uſed to be a Teſtimony of this: but of late all Methods have been employed to make it a Teſtimony of the contrary; by crowding into it, and even into the moſt ſacred Week of it, as many Entertainments, both in private Houſes and public Theatres, as can be contrived. If theſe Things are wrong, why may not you take the preſent Opportunity, when you have had ſo loud a Call to Seriouſneſs, for beginning to practiſe a little more of it, than ordinary; and, for that Purpoſe, keep back from ſome Places, to which elſe you might have gone? Let others gueſs the Reaſon. If they aſk, let them know it. If they deride you; either enter upon the Subject, or avoid it, as you ſee a Likelihood, or none, of doing Good: but at leaſt keep to your Point; with Temper, with Charity, yet with Reſolution.

"But if we act thus, all the World will "ſhun us, we ſhall be left alone: what ſhall "we do?" The more valuable Part of the World will not ſhun you: and the Loſs of ſome of your Company may be very far from doing you Harm. It is likely, you will have a good deal more Time to yourſelves: but can you not find, have you not already, full Employment for it? Diſcreet Conduct of your own Affairs, kind Aſſiſtance of others, needful Care of your Health, proper Improvement

of

of your Mind in uſeful Knowledge, theſe Things may ſurely fill up no ſmall Part of your Day. But there is another Work, the moſt neceſſary of all, the *one Thing needful* *, to which perhaps you have not applied, near ſo much as it requires, near ſo much as you imagine: I mean, a ſerious practical Attention to your ſpiritual State. Surely you muſt be ſenſible, that the Buſineſs of a Chriſtian is, not only to abſtain from groſs Wickedneſs, and obſerve the Forms of Piety, but to mortify that *Love of the World* and of Pleaſure, which is inconſiſtent with *the Love of the Father* †; and *ſet our Affections on Things above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right Hand of God* ‡; to cultivate and exerciſe Equity, Mildneſs and Charity towards all Men, and perform from a right Principle every Duty of every ſocial Relation; yet to know, that after all *we are unprofitable Servants* ‖, and muſt rely, not on our own Righteouſneſs, but the Mercy of the Goſpel. Great Numbers amongſt you doubtleſs are, and may long, perhaps always, have been, what common Language calls moral, and even religious Perſons. But are you what an awakened Conſcience, what the *Scripture of Truth* §, calls ſo? Compare that, and the Directions, which wiſe and good Men have drawn out of it for your Uſe, with your paſt Actions, Words, and Thoughts. Examine both well; without frightening yourſelves un-

* Luke x. 42. † 1 John ii. 15. ‡ Col. iii. 1, 2.
‖ Luke xvii. 10. § Dan. x. 21.

reaſonably, or accuſing yourſelves unjuſtly, but without flattering yourſelves at all: remembring, that God is merciful, but remembring alſo, that he is holy. This alone may prove no ſhort Taſk. And if the Inquiry end on the whole in your Favour, as God grant it may; frequent Reflexions, that your Maker is your Friend, and Heaven your Inheritance, will enable you to paſs your future Days very joyfully, how little ſoever may be contributed of ſuperficial Happineſs from any other Quarter. But at the beſt, you will aſſuredly perceive at the ſame Time, what will give you ſtill further Occupation, many Things in yourſelves to beg Forgiveneſs for, to amend, to watch over. And ſhould you find, as I fear too many of you will, that *your Heart* as yet *is not right in the Sight of God; that you are* ſtill *in the Gall of Bitterneſs and the Bond of Iniquity* *; here will be Work enough for you to do, though every Thing unneceſſary be left undone: to humble yourſelves before him with deep Contrition; to lay hold on his offered Mercy, with true Faith in the Merits of his Son; to pray for his Grace, and uſe it; to *cleanſe yourſelves from all Filthineſs of Fleſh and Spirit* †. Never aſk, what you ſhall do with your ſpare Time, till you have gone through theſe Things. And when you have, if the late providential Warning hath been, in the leaſt Degree, the Occaſion of your undertaking them, you will bleſs God to your

* Acts viii. 21, 23. † 2 Cor. vii. 1.

dying

dying Day for the Alarm, which it gave you.

Amidſt the innumerable and ineſtimable Privileges, belonging to thoſe, who have *acquainted themſelves with Him, and are at Peace* *, one, peculiarly proper to be mentioned now, is, that while they preſerve their Integrity, they will never have Cauſe to be diſmayed or diſturbed at whatever happens in this World. Some good Perſons indeed may be tempted to accuſe themſelves of an irreligious Inſenſibility, that they have felt no more on the late Occaſion. But if, on any Occaſion, they have felt enough to make them fear God and ſerve him: let them never be grieved at what, in all Likelihood, is merely conſtitutional, if it be not rather a pious Serenity. We read, that when *Elijah ſtood before the Lord*, firſt *a great and ſtrong Wind rent the Mountains and brake in Pieces the Rocks; but the Lord was not in the Wind: after the Wind was an Earthquake; but the Lord was not in the Earthquake: after the Earthquake* was *a Fire; but the Lord was not in the Fire: after the Fire was a ſmall ſtill Voice*, and in that God ſpoke to his Servant †. If then he hath ſpoken to us ever ſo gently, and we have heard him: it ſhould be Matter of Comfort, not Deſpondency, that he hath found no Need of uſing Words of Terror to us. But a much commoner Caſe is, that pious Minds are ſtruck, on theſe ex-

* Job xxii. 21. † 1 Kings xix. 11, 12.

traordinary

traordinary Manifeſtations of Divine Power, with great ſudden Horror. So was *David: My Fleſh trembleth for Fear of thee: and I am afraid of thy Judgments* *. So was *Moſes* at Mount *Sinai*, when he ſaid, *I exceedingly tremble and quake* †. Therefore never do you, of weaker Spirits, either think ill of yourſelves or wonder, if your Feelings are both more painful and more durable, than you wiſh. Still they are eſſentially different from thoſe of wicked Perſons: your Dependence on God will enable you to check your Apprehenſions, in ſome Meaſure, when at the higheſt, and in a while to recover your former Tranquillity: to ſay with *Job, Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him* ‡: or in the more triumphant Language of the Pſalmiſt: *God is our Hope and Strength, a very preſent Help in Trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the Earth be moved, and though the Hills be carried into the Midſt of the Sea* ‖. The whole Frame of Nature, and every Thing that comes to paſs in it, is friendly to Perſons in earneſt religious, and *works together for their Good* §. *Life or Death, Things preſent or Things to come, all Things are theirs; and they are Chriſt's; and Chriſt is God's* **.

Earthquakes in particular, terrible as they appear, have often been Marks of God's Favour to his People. There was one at the

* Pſ. cxix. 120. † Heb. xii. 21. ‡ Job xiii. 15.
‖ Pſ. xlvi. 1, 2. § Rom. viii. 28. ** 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.

Death,

Death, another at the Reſurrection of our bleſſed Lord: the two great Bulwarks of Chriſtian Comfort. At *the Day of Pentecoſt, there came a Sound from Heaven, as of a ruſhing mighty Wind* *, probably ſomewhat reſembling the Sound, which you heard ſo lately. In a ſhort Time after, on the firſt Attempt of perſecuting the Diſciples, *when they had prayed, the Place was ſhaken, where they were aſſembled together: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghoſt, and ſpake the Word of God with Boldneſs* †. Again, when *Paul* and *Silas* were impriſoned, while they *ſang Praiſes unto God, ſuddenly there was a great Earthquake, ſo that the Foundations of the Priſon were ſhaken, and all the Doors opened:* which was immediately followed by the Converſion of the Jaylor and his Family; and the Deliverance of the Apoſtle and his Companion by the Magiſtrates ‡. Why then ſhould that ſo greatly affright You, which hath miniſtred to ſo many others, Cauſe of Thankſgiving?

"It is ſomewhat extremely awful." So is every Thing, that reminds us, with any Strength, of God and our latter End. And yet, if we are not reminded of them effectually, we are undone to Eternity. It is not near ſo awful, as what you notwithſtanding profeſs to deſire and pray for: the Time, when He ſhall come to *ſit on his Throne, from whoſe Face Earth and Heaven ſhall flee away,*

* Acts ii. 1, 2. † Acts iv. 31. ‡ Acts xvi. 25, &c.

and no Place be found for them *. "But we "may be ſwallowed up inſtantly." You may, this very Inſtant. And ſo you may die, every Moment, a thouſand other Ways beſides. But do you not conſider, in whoſe Power it is, whether you ſhall or not? Cannot God preſerve you? And will he not, if it be for your Advantage? Hear the Pſalmiſt: *Whoſo dwelleth under the Defence of the moſt High, ſhall abide under the Shadow of the Almighty. Thou ſhalt not be afraid for the Terror by Night, nor the Deſtruction that waſteth at Noon-day. A thouſand ſhall fall at thy Side, and ten thouſand at thy right Hand: but it ſhall not come nigh thee. With thine Eyes ſhalt thou behold, and ſee the Reward of the Ungodly* †. But if he thinks it proper you ſhould die now, why is it not beſt for you? Shall you not eſcape by it innumerable, unknown Temptations, and Hazards to your Soul; and be ſafe and happy for ever? Humility bids you pray againſt ſudden Death. But Reſignation bids you receive it very contentedly, if after all God chuſes it for you. In the moſt important Senſe, no Death is ſudden, for which you are prepared; and good Perſons are prepared always.

But perhaps this Kind of Viſitation alarms you, not merely as a dangerous one, but as a Token that God is angry. And he is ſo: but with whom? Not with the Good. Or if he

* Rev. xx. 11. † Pſ. xci. 1, 5, 6, 7, 8.

be,

be, it is only a fatherly Diſpleaſure, that we do not become better. And is not any Way of ſhewing that, infinitely kinder, than leaving us unreproved, and letting us grow worſe? If then you perceive yourſelves to have been falling into Sin or Negligence; be thankful for ſo timely a Warning, and reform. But if you do not, or if you have rectified your Courſe; for the Honour of Religion be of good Courage. Keep far indeed from Levity of Heart, Speech and Behaviour: eſpecially in Relation to a Providence, intended to produce very different Effects: but ſtill maintain and expreſs a peaceful, a cheerful Compoſure: nor let it once be ſaid, that You were in the greateſt Fear, who have Cauſe for none; while They were in none, who have Cauſe for the greateſt. Yet if you cannot help this, conſider it only as a very pardonable Weakneſs in yourſelves: and inſtead of entertaining even a momentary Thought of envying Them, recollect with tender Pity, how ſwift the Hour of that inconceivably more terrible Shock is coming upon them, which the Words of St. *John* deſcribe in ſo awakening a Manner. *And I beheld, and lo there was a great Earthquake: and the Sun became black as Sackcloth, and the Moon became as Blood, and the Stars fell unto the Earth; and the Heaven departed as a Scrowl, when it is rolled together; and every Mountain and Iſland were removed out of their Place. And the Kings of the Earth, and the Great Men, and the Rich and the Mighty, and*

and every Bond-man and every Free-man, hid themſelves in the Dens and in the Rocks of the Mountains; and ſaid to the Mountains and the Rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the Face of Him, that ſitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb: for the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who ſhall be able to ſtand *?

If You deſire to be able, your only Way is, to obey his Commands during Life, who is to determine your everlaſting State after Death; obſerving the Apoſtle's Exhortation, with which I conclude: *See that ye refuſe not Him, that ſpeaketh. For if they eſcaped not, who refuſed Him that ſpake on Earth,* at the Delivery of the Law; *much more ſhall not we, if we turn away from Him, that ſpeaketh from Heaven: whoſe Voice then ſhook the Earth; but he hath promiſed, ſaying, Yet once more I ſhake, not the Earth only, but alſo Heaven. And this Word, Yet once more, ſignifieth the removing of thoſe Things that are ſhaken, as of Things that are made; that thoſe, which cannot be ſhaken, may remain. Wherefore we receiving a Kingdom, that cannot be moved; let us have Grace, whereby we may ſerve him acceptably, with Reverence and godly Fear: for our God is a conſuming Fire* †.

* Rev. vi. 12—17. † Heb. xii. 25—29.

SER-

SERMON IX.

Preached at the Pariſh-Church of St. *James*, *Weſtminſter*, *December* 30, 1750, on reſigning the Rectory.

2 Cor. xiii. 11.

Finally, Brethren, farewell. ———

YOU have expected for ſeveral Months what you will immediately underſtand the Choice of theſe Words to import, my Reſignation of the Office of your Miniſter. If any one blames me, or is ſorry for it, I intreat him to conſider. Above ſeventeen Years and a half have paſſed over my Head in this Place. I have ſpent the Flower and Vigour of my Life in your Service: and now I find, and muſt expect to find, myſelf growing leſs fit every Day for the Duties of ſo laborious a Cure. You would not wiſh to wear me quite out before my Time: I would not wiſh to be burthenſome, without being uſeful to you: and it is much better, that you ſhould be grieved at my Departure, than weary of my Stay; that I ſhould leave you, while I can do ſomething, than continue with you, when I can do nothing: and convenient Opportunities of re-

removing are not likely, as you muſt be ſenſible, to happen frequently. Beſides, the Care of my Dioceſe requires me to be abſent from you near half my Time: another Perſon may be able to beſtow His upon you almoſt entirely. In ſo long a Space I have given Offence probably to more Perſons than I am aware; whether juſt Offence, is not for me to ſay: my Succeſſor will have offended no one. I have undergone ſome pretty ſevere Trials, with ſuch Temper and Spirits as I could: but how either would hold out, in my declining Age, to undergo more of them, I cannot foreſee. And therefore on the whole, I hope it will not be imputed to me as a Fault, that I have accepted of the Offer, which his Majeſty's Goodneſs hath been induced to make me. I did not ſollicit to be brought amongſt you; nor have I ſollicited to quit you. I had a large Income in the Church, when I came hither: I have not enriched myſelf by my Abode here: I ſhall not enrich myſelf by going from hence. Hitherto I truſt I have not remarkably conſulted my own Eaſe: and hereafter, through God's Grace, I ſhall be diligent according to my Ability, both in Preaching and other Duties of my Profeſſion. But it muſt not be thought ſtrange, if amongſt theſe, I chiefly devote myſelf, to the private Study of the holy Scripture, and the daily Attendance on Divine Worſhip, in the Station, to which I am retiring. I return you my heartieſt Thanks for your kind Acceptance of my Labours,

bours, for your Indulgence, for your Liberality to me. I humbly aſk your Pardon for my Failings and Omiſſions, which I am ſenſible have been many: though I can truly ſay, that I have always uprightly endeavoured to promote your Good in every Thing, Spiritual and Temporal; and would willingly think I need not add, that I have in no Inſtance attempted to do you Injuſtice. If in any I can properly ſerve this Pariſh, or any Member of it, I ſhall ever embrace the Occaſion with Pleaſure. And for the beſt Proof, that I can give at preſent, of that Diſpoſition, I beg leave to mention a few Things at Parting, about your parochial Affairs, your future Miniſter, and yourſelves, which I conceive may be uſeful to you; and concerning which I beſeech you to bear the ſame Freedom of Speech from me, that you have allowed me to uſe, on other Subjects, for ſo many Years paſt.

I begin with your civil Affairs. For both the Management of them, and the Judgment paſſed upon it, are Points, that may conſiderably affect, not only your Intereſt, but your Conſciences too. Conducting them right is Matter of Conſcience, on one Hand: and abſtaining from unjuſt Accuſations or Suſpicions, and feeling Sentiments of juſt Gratitude, is ſo, on the other. In ſome of theſe Matters I have had a Share, jointly with your other Veſtrymen: and ſhould by no Means do them Juſtice, were I to omit ſaying, that I have

found thoſe of them, who have attended, impartially and diſintereſtedly ſtudious, as might indeed be expected from their Ranks and Characters, of promoting your general Welfare; of rectifying Errors, and framing and executing due Regulations. To theſe therefore in particular I make my grateful Acknowledgments for the Aſſiſtance and Support, which they have ſo conſtantly and unanimouſly afforded me, in the moſt friendly and obliging Manner. Nor are they few or ſmall Things, which on a fair Inquiry, you will find to have been done by them for your Advantage, within the laſt twenty Years: and that more have not, is principally owing to this, that their Authority extends to a leſs Part of your Concerns by far, than I believe you commonly imagine. For Inſtance, it doth not extend to that moſt important Article, the Care of your Poor: concerning the Maintenance and Government of whom however, they have in my Time drawn up and recommended Rules, that were the Product of much Examination and Thought; and on more Occaſions than one, have given and repeated ſuch Advice, as in ſome Things hath proved extremely ſerviceable; and would have been ſo in more, had it been ſooner and better followed.

Beſides your Veſtry, there are ſeveral Meetings of other Perſons for Pariſh Buſineſs, vulgarly called by the ſame Name, becauſe they have been uſually held in the ſame Place. And

And of theſe alſo I can aſſure you, with great Truth, that ſuch, as I have been intitled to attend, are carried on with perfect Fidelity, and no ſmall Vigilance. The Affairs tranſacted in them are, The Diſpoſal of the Money collected yearly from Houſe to Houſe on the King's Letter; the Direction of that excellent Inſtitution, your School of Charity Girls; and the Diſtribution of the Money given at the Sacrament: Part of which is employed in buying Coals and Coats and Gowns for indigent Perſons, in the Winter Seaſon; Part in cloathing, teaching and putting Apprentices, forty Boys of the Pariſh; Part in relieving, by the joint Approbation of the Rector and Church-Wardens, who meet for that End, ſuch other Objects of Compaſſion, as apply to them: and of all the Diſburſements before-mentioned, as exact an Account, as well can be, is kept. Thus far therefore I can anſwer for it, that you are ſerved faithfully; whatever prudential Improvements longer Experience and better Judgment may be able to make, as they have already made ſome.

And in Officers, whoſe Proceedings have not uſually fallen within my immediate Knowledge, I have had very little Ground to ſuſpect wilful or groſs Corruption or Negligence; and often the utmoſt Reaſon to be aſſured of exemplary Uprightneſs and Aſſiduity. Still the Burthen of your Poor is both a heavy one, as I fear it is in moſt old and large Pariſhes; and

a growing one, as I fear it is in all, old or new. That it cannot be leſſened, I would on no Account venture to ſay. On the contrary I would earneſtly exhort, here in publick, thoſe of you, who are now, or hereafter ſhall be Overſeers, as I have often done your Predeceſſors in private, and I hope not quite in vain, to procure all the Information and take all the Pains, that your other Engagements will permit, for that Purpoſe: to be very tender indeed to the Needy, where there is Cauſe; but not to be moved by falſe Good-nature of your own, by groundleſs Importunities of theirs, or unreaſonable Recommendations of other Perſons, to beſtow on any, eſpecially the Undeſerving, more than is really neceſſary. I would further exhort you, with the ſame Intent, to diſcountenance as much as you poſſibly can, Idleneſs, Intemperance and Debauchery, which are the main Cauſes of Indigence; and uſe your utmoſt Influence, to make the Attendance on divine Worſhip and Inſtruction, at the Infirmary, univerſal, conſtant and beneficial: to ſtudy Unanimity and mutual Aſſiſtance, and *let nothing be done through Strife or Vain-glory* *: to deſpiſe little Advantages and Self-indulgences; which, though they may be but a trifling Foundation for Complaint, frequently occaſion a great deal: and together with doing what Good you can, labour to keep *your Good* from being *evil ſpoken of* †; particularly by a Readineſs to

* Phil. ii. 3. † Rom. xiv. 16.

give

give Satisfaction on any Article of your Conduct, to every fair Enquirer, who is concerned to aſk it: endeavouring, according to the Apoſtle's Rule, *that no Man ſhould blame you in this Abundance, which is adminiſtred by you*; and *providing for honeſt Things, not only in the Sight of the Lord, but in the Sight of Men* *. For thus you will diſcharge your own Conſciences, and prevent at once needleſs Expence and uncharitable Reflexions; you will gain Eſteem to yourſelves, and to the Office that you ſerve; make it both eaſy, and in ſome Meaſure neceſſary, to your Succeſſors, to act rightly too; and ſo perhaps will long reap your Share of Profit, as well as Credit, from what you have done.

But then I muſt at the ſame Time, with equal Earneſtneſs, beg thoſe, who do not ſerve ſuch Offices, to conſider with Equity the Caſe of ſuch as do. Reflect a little firſt, how tedious and irkſome an Employment it is, to go about collecting Rates at thouſands of Doors. Should not you think it very hard, to have this Work doubled and trebled upon you, by being needleſsly ſent away, and obliged to come again ſeveral Times over? Reflect alſo, how diſagreeable it muſt be, to diſtribute this Collection weekly, daily, hourly almoſt, amongſt fourteen or fifteen hundred miſerable Wretches; to hear and ſee the Diſtreſſes of them all; to guard againſt the

* 2 Cor. viii. 20, 21.

Frauds, bear the Noiſomneſs, undergo the Ill-language of too many of them. Would you imagine, that by doing all this, and receiving nothing for it, you had deſerved to be ſpoken of, as the worſt of Men? But you will ſay, There are grievous Abuſes. And it is impoſſible to anſwer for every Caſe or every Perſon, through a Courſe of Years. But on the whole, I verily believe, there is little or no deſigned Abuſe; and of indiſcreet Management leſs than is apprehended. But were there as much; conſider again: Perſons of higher Rank diſdain to undertake ſo mean an Office, as that of Overſeers. Tradeſmen therefore muſt: who from their Education cannot always have the moſt extended, or the cleareſt Views of Things: who have their own Buſineſs to fill up moſt of their Time; which muſt be minded, elſe they are undone: who come unexperienced into this difficult Employment, and do not continue in it long enough to acquire Experience ſufficient; are backward perhaps, as we moſt of us are, to take Directions from others; are often divided in Opinion amongſt themſelves; and by the Time that they can agree what is right, find or think too much of their Year gone, to ſet about the Execution of it: who, beſides all this, are too commonly driven to do what they would not, by the Sollicitations of their Neighbours, and even of their Superiors, on whom they depend; nay, ſometimes are traduced and vilified for aiming to be more frugal, than

thoſe that went before them. Surely to Perſons in theſe Circumſtances great Allowances ought to be made: and that in Prudence, as well as Equity. Deſpair of pleaſing you will tempt them to be careleſs what they do: whereas, if you manifeſt a Diſpoſition to be ſatisfied with them, and thankful to them, ſo far as you have Cauſe, you will excite them to deſerve ſtill better of you; eſpecially, if along with this, they were but more conſtantly and regularly inſpected, aſſiſted and ſupported, by the Juſtices of the Peace: to whom therefore I beg Leave here to recommend this good Work, as I have done elſewhere more than once. And I do it at preſent with the greater Hope of Succeſs, becauſe I know ſeveral of them are deſirous of undertaking it; and am perſuaded, that nothing but Want of Concert, and putting the Matter in a due Method, prevents it.

I have dwelt ſomewhat longer on the Affairs of your Poor, becauſe they have produced Uneaſineſſes among you, not only againſt one another, but againſt your Miniſter: though he hath no more Concern in them, than to pay his Proportion towards this, as well as other common Burthens; excepting his general Duty, of exhorting all under his Care to do theirs. And I hope you muſt ſee, that this Exhortation of mine, which I have often thought of giving you before now, hath no other Motive than a moſt hearty Deſire, that,

to ſpeak in the Words immediately after the Text, you may *be of one Mind*, and *live in Peace, and the God of Love and Peace be with you*. Let me now mention another Thing of a more eccleſiaſtical Nature. This Building, in which we are, greatly wants both cleaning and beautifying, as is too viſible, and repairing alſo; which the Law, that founded the Pariſh, requires to be done by a Rate, levied on the Inhabitants. Leſſer Repairs have been made, without a Rate, for many Years paſt, out of the Incomes ariſing from Pews and Burials. But that from the latter is greatly diminiſhed: and both together cannot near do what is now wanted. And yet taking the Method, which after all muſt be taken, and the ſooner the better, hath been delayed for fear of Clamour. Let me beſeech you therefore, to remove theſe Apprehenſions of your Officers beforehand, as far as you can, by proper Aſſurances that you underſtand the Caſe rightly; and when the Work is undertaken, to contribute your allotted Shares with Cheerfulneſs. I would not urge to you ſuch low Conſiderations, as that of not coming behind other Pariſhes in this Reſpect, whom you excell ſo vaſtly in Wealth and Rank. It is much fitter to remind you of the diſtinguiſhed Honour, due by Reaſon, Scripture, and the Conſent of Mankind, to ſacred Things; and of the Duty and Wiſdom of not furniſhing a Pretence, either to Unbelievers, or Papiſts, for triumphing over Chriſtianity, or Proteſtantiſm;

as not requiring, or not being able to obtain, from its Profeſſors, any Degree of that Decency in their Churches, which even the middle Sort of them would not bear to be wanting in their Dwelling-houſes. Indeed every Thing publick, though of a civil Nature only, and yet more of a religious, ought far to exceed, in Point of Dignity, what is for mere private Uſe. And the Neglect of that Rule both ſhews, and will increaſe, a Preference of perſonal Intereſts to thoſe of the Community. We read, that many among the Children of *Iſrael*, both Men and Women, brought voluntary *Offerings unto the Lord*, for the Work of the Tabernacle *. The early Chriſtians imitated their Example, as ſoon as they durſt: and after the ſuperfluous Ornaments of following Ages were juſtly diſapproved; valuable Preſents have been made in the reformed Church of *England*, and in this very Church, for the greater Solemnity and Beauty of divine Service. Why would it not now be one fitting Mark of Regard to God, if Perſons of Fortune and Condition were to do the ſame Thing? At leaſt, will it not be a lamentable Mark of Diſregard to him, if any murmur to do what the Law enjoins them?

But I proceed to ſpeak to you concerning your future Miniſter. When I prepared this Part of my Diſcourſe, I had not the leaſt Gueſs who it would be; nor have I added or

* Exod. xxxv. 5, &c.

altered

altered one Word ſince: nor am I ſure that I know, even now: if I do, he is almoſt entirely a Stranger to me, except by what he hath written, which is excellent. And therefore you muſt underſtand me to ſpeak, without any particular Reference to the Perſon, but only on a general Conſideration of the Caſe. The ſpiritual and eternal Good of Multitudes of Souls will depend not a little on their Attention to his Inſtructions: and that will depend very much on the Opinion formed of him, and the Reception given him, at firſt. For God's Sake therefore, let none of you ſet out with Prepoſſeſſions againſt him, of any Kind. For in all Likelihood they will wrong him: and aſſuredly they will do Harm to you. But eſpecially I beg, that whoever profeſſes any Reſpect for me, would ſhew it by paying a peculiar Reſpect to my Succeſſor. In whatſoever he excells me, as I ſincerely wiſh he may in all Things, acknowledge it freely, thank God for it, give him the Encouragement of knowing it: and never let any one be ſo abſurd as to imagine, that he ſhall perform either a right or an acceptable Part to me, by detracting in the leaſt from his Merit. If in any Thing he ſhould ſeem to be inferior: probably a little Time and Uſe may change your Minds: you may be reconciled to, and perhaps by Degrees prefer, what you diſliked, when it was new to you. Or if not, remember the Apoſtle's Obſervation: *Every Man hath his proper Gift of God: one after this Man-*

Manner, another after that *. He that is only ſecond in ſuch or ſuch an Attainment, may be firſt in a different one, of equal or greater Benefit. And it is very unfair to judge of a Man's Character or Uſefulneſs on the whole, by a ſingle or a few Articles. Beſides, he will be able to adapt both his Diſcourſes and his Behaviour to you much better after a Time, than is poſſible while he is yet unacquainted with you; and to undertake more for your Service, after ſome Space for Preparation, than juſt at preſent: which you may recollect was my own Caſe. Therefore do not expect too much from him, nor be too eaſy of Belief againſt him, in the Beginning. And afterwards both conſider and inquire, what is reaſonable to expect, and what not, before you find Fault.

The Bodies and the Voices of Men, you well know, are not equally ſtrong: and one may exert himſelf without Danger, to a Degree, which another, though ſeemingly as well qualified by Nature, muſt not attempt. Now *where there is a willing Mind, it is accepted* by Heaven, and ſhould be by You, *according to that a Man hath, and not according to that he hath not* †. And though Perſons be able, yet ſuch Things as are not enjoined, and have not been cuſtomary, you have no Right to demand, or expect, from them. Permit me to mention a few of theſe. The Sunday Even-

* 1 Cor. vii. 7. † 2 Cor. viii. 12.

ings

ings Lecture on the Catechiſm had its Riſe but twelve Years ago: and there is none then, and ſcarce any on Week Days, in the neighbouring Pariſhes. Sermons occaſionally by your Miniſter at the Chapels, in the Afternoon, are not above five Years older than that. The Salary for the reading of early and late Prayers at this Church was paid at firſt by voluntary Subſcriptions: afterwards out of the Offertory Money: but now for the laſt twenty Years by the Rector; and I believe no ſuch Thing is done by any Rector elſewhere in the Nation. The Diſtribution of religious Tracts, at his Coſt, to the Pariſhioners, particularly to thoſe who are inſtructed for Confirmation, is of yet later Date. And therefore, if your ſucceeding Miniſter omits theſe Things, you are not to blame him: if he continues any of them, you are to thank him.

Another Point, akin to the laſt, in which I muſt intreat you to be reaſonable with him, is the Expectation of Charity from him. I have all along had other conſiderable Preferment together with this. I have had Sums of Money, ſeveral Times of late Years, and this laſt a very great one, intruſted to my Diſpoſal. The Caſe of my Succeſſor may be extremely different: and both the High and the Low among you ſhould allow for the Difference. It is become very uſual with many of you to recommend, when requeſted, any poor

Per-

Person whom you know, I am sorry to add, and more than a few, whom you do not know, to the Rector for Relief; being deceived perhaps by Stories of pretended Legacies or Gifts, put into his Hands for that Purpose. And then he must either run a Risk of disobliging you, by rejecting your Recommendations; or be overburthened with the Expence, which they bring on him; or at least every Hour almost of his Time will be broken and filled up, with hearing and examining Distresses and Characters. This last Inconvenience, I assure you, hath grown upon me in such a Manner, that I do not know, how I could have continued to go through it. Therefore when poor Persons apply to you, remember, you ought to relieve them yourselves, if you are able: and if you are unable, you should consider, that more Objects than enough will come of Course to the Knowledge of your Minister, without adding to them thus. We of the Clergy should undoubtedly be ready, both to give our own Alms plentifully, and to assist others in giving theirs: but still, as even the Apostles pleaded, *it is not Reason, that we should leave the Word of God, and serve Tables* *.

Another Thing, which I must take the Liberty of asking for my Successor, is your Bounty. I again return you my Thanks for that, which you have exercised towards me.

* Acts vi. 2.

But

But indulge me, at the ſame Time, a few Words on the Subject. There are indeed legal Dues, belonging to the Rectory, ſo conſiderable, that were they all paid, and nothing more added, probably the Income would be greater, than it now is. But they are ſo far from being all paid, that in the principal Article, Eaſter Offerings, though expreſsly required by the Act of Parliament, which founded the Pariſh, I believe, two thouſand Families, out of three, pay nothing. Such as are known to be poor, are never aſked. Such as only ſay they are poor, though that Plea would neither be allowed them, nor made by them, in any other Caſe, are never aſked again. And ſuch as refuſe, without condeſcending to alledge any Reaſon, have not in my Time, been either compelled, or to my Knowledge threatened or ſollicited. Yet ſurely it may be ſaid without Offence, by one who hath now no Intereſt depending, that in ſuch Matters, as well as others, Conſcience binds all Men, both to pay what they know is due, and to make a fair Inquiry, whether what is demanded be not due. If they, that will do neither, were forced; they would have no Cauſe to complain. But the more your Miniſter loſes by his Averſion to harſh Methods, the more he is intitled to your voluntary Kindneſs. This alone is what makes his Income large: and were it yet larger than it is, as perhaps you think it, permit me to ſay; He, that doth the Work, deſerves the Wages; out of which

which no ſmall Deductions will be made by Calls upon him of various Kinds. The utmoſt, that almoſt any of you give, bears, I conceive, no very high Proportion to ſeveral of your annual Expences on other Perſons, and Purpoſes, of leſs Importance, to ſay no worſe. And diminiſhing your Generoſity muſt be, in ſome Meaſure, to the moſt diſintereſted Man, not only an undeſerved Mortification, but a Diſcouragement of his Zeal to ſerve you. On every Account therefore obey the Scripture Rule, which, take Notice, is general: *Let him, that is taught in the Word, communicate unto him, that teacheth, in all good Things* *.

But a far more valuable Mark of your Regard to your Miniſter, and, I dare ſay, beyond Compariſon a more agreeable one to him, will be, your Attendance on him here. I ſee no Cauſe to doubt, but you will have every Inducement to this, that you ever have had: and you will aſſuredly have the ſtrongeſt which you can have; that aſſembling yourſelves for Worſhip and Inſtruction is the Ordinance of Chriſt, from which you may expect ſuch a Bleſſing on your Hearts and Lives, as you cannot expect without it. And I have taught you all this while, to very little Effect, if you have not yet learnt, that *neither is he, that planteth, any Thing; neither he, that watereth; but God, that giveth the Increaſe* †.

* Gal. vi. 6. † 1 Cor. iii. 7.

If

If you *have Mens Perſons in Admiration* *, and come only to hear this or that Preacher; however you are pleaſed, however you are moved, no real and laſting Good will be at all likely to follow. And if you come to hear the Goſpel, *not as the Word of Men*, but as *the Word of God* †; let who will diſpenſe it, you will receive Benefit.

This Place indeed doth not afford Room for all the Inhabitants. But the Room, which it doth afford, is moſt equitably allotted to ſuch as made the earlieſt Application for it: and they, who cannot as yet be accommodated here, may without Difficulty at the two Chapels. No one therefore needs omit divine Service: eſpecially, as you have Prayers four Times every Day at the Church, twice every Day at the Chapels, and Sermons twice every Lord's Day at both. You have alſo had, for a conſiderable Part of the Year, a Lecture on the Catechiſm, equivalent to a Sermon, both on the Evening of that Day, and the Morning of another, the latter of which, at leaſt, you will probably continue to have. And ſurely you may prevail on yourſelves, if need be, to alter your uſual Hour, of eating, or viſiting, once or twice a Week; in Order to come the oftener, and adore your Maker; to hear his Word, and give your Servants Time to do the ſame Thing. Nay, why may not many of you ſo regulate your Affairs, as to frequent

* Jude, Ver. 16. † 1 Theſſ. ii. 13.

daily

daily Prayers in the Church? Few of you, I fear, have them in your Families: *I ſpeak this to your Shame* *. Nor muſt I fail to remind you, as you know I have often done, of that highly uſeful, and by no means terrible or difficult Duty, of receiving the Lord's Supper; enjoined all Chriſtians, and yet abſolutely ſlighted by moſt. But obſerve, at the ſame Time, that private Prayer and Meditation, ſuited to your inward State, is a Duty full as important, as publick Prayer, or hearing Sermons, or partaking of the Table of the Lord: and the latter, without the former, will be of ſmall Efficacy. You may, if you will, deſpiſe either or both: and they are commonly deſpiſed, to a Degree not known in any other Chriſtian Country, nor in this before the preſent Age. But the World is not the better for it: nor will You. Your Virtue will become inſecure, and grievouſly imperfect; your Senſe of Piety will wither away; your Hopes of Futurity will grow faint; your Fears of it, when you reflect, will ſtrengthen; till you will be glad to throw off both together, if you can; and live and die like the Beaſts that periſh. Others will learn, and in Part from You, to think and act in the ſame Manner; every one's Profit, Pleaſure, Anger or Caprice will be the only Rule of his Conduct: and what Security of any ſingle Enjoyment of Life can there be, in ſuch a State of Things?

* 1 Cor. vi. 5. xv. 34.

But then, alas, going through every Exerciſe of Devotion, both here and at home, merely to do our Share towards keeping Society in good Order, is Policy, not Religion: and going through them for the Sake of the outward Act, without Care to improve by them, is Superſtition; miſtaking the Means for the End. *The Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men*, not to fix their Expectations of future Happineſs on Forms of any Sort, but to *teach them, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, they ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent World, looking for that bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt; who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works* *. Theſe are the fundamental Doctrines of Chriſtianity: and I appeal to your Conſciences, whether they are not alſo the Doctrines, which I have perpetually inculcated upon you; though with Mixtures, no doubt too frequent, of human Infirmity and Error. Yet notwithſtanding theſe, I truſt, through God's Mercy, I can ſafely ſay with St. *Paul, Ye know, from the firſt Day that I came among you, how I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have ſhewed and taught you; teſtifying Repentance toward God, and Faith toward our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And could I ſay alſo, that I had done this, in a

* Tit. ii. 11—14.

proper

proper Degree, *from Houſe to Houſe*, as well as *publickly*; then I might, with him too, *take you to Record this Day, that I am pure from the Blood of all Men**. But, though I hope I have never been backward to embrace Opportunities of this Sort, when offered me; yet that I have not more diligently ſought them, and laboured to introduce more ſerious Diſcourſe into my ordinary Viſits to you, I am ſenſible is a Fault, which neither the Uncommonneſs of ſuch Converſation, nor the Fear of diſguſting Perſons by it, are ſufficient to excuſe. Allow me therefore to make you ſuch Amends, as I can, for this and all my Defects, by admoniſhing you ſolemnly now, and leaving it on your Hearts, that Religion is the greateſt and moſt important of Truths; that the Buſineſs of this tranſitory Life, compared with which, Profits, Pleaſures, Honours, Acquiſitions of all Sorts, are Trifles and Follies, is the preparing for an endleſs one to come; that the true Preparation conſiſts in active Love to God and Man and Virtue; that ſuch Love can never be duly excited or maintained within us, but by the Methods which Heaven hath directed; and that theſe are, a deep Conviction of our Guilt and Weakneſs; an earneſt and daily Application to our heavenly Father, in Faith of the Merits of his crucified Son, for the Pardon of our Tranſgreſſions, and the ſanctifying Influences of his holy Spirit; a conſtant attentive Uſe of thoſe Ordi-

* Acts xx. 18, 20, 21, 26.

nances, by which he hath appointed Both to be conveyed; a conſcientious watchful Care of governing our Actions, Words and Thoughts, not by the Dictates of Inclination or Faſhion, but the Precepts of Reaſon and Scripture. If I have taught any of you theſe Things effectually, God's Name be praiſed: teach them your Children, your Servants, your Friends; for neglecting their Inſtruction is partaking in their Sins. If I have not; for His Sake, and that of your Souls, learn them now: elſe *I have preached*, and *You have believed, in vain* *; and woe will be to Me, or You, or both of us, at the great Day.

You have peculiar Cauſe to *take Heed how ye hear* †. Perſons of high Rank every where, and this Pariſh hath many ſuch, are concerned beyond others to be *Patterns of good Works* ‡; and are too commonly beyond others Patterns of bad ones. Both They, and the middle Part of You, live amongſt innumerable Incitements to unlawful Gratifications, unfit Expences; and Waſte of precious Time, even the moſt precious of all, that of this Day, in idle pernicious Amuſements. And the Contagion of this over-grown wicked City tempts the loweſt Part of you, moſt dangerouſly, to all Sorts of Vices, and all Sorts of Crimes. Think then, how carefully you ought to preſerve yourſelves and yours, by the Antidote of

* 1 Cor. xv. 2. † Luke viii. 18. ‡ Tit. ii. 7.

God's

God's Word and Worship, from so destructive and deceitful Poisons.

Great Numbers of you have attended here very assiduously: you must have felt something stirred within you, that hath induced you to it: the Hopes of your Salvation depend on the Fruit, which that shall bring forth: and surely then you will not let it be blasted, and die away. To many of you I have spoken many Years: to some as long as you can remember: what Benefit have you received? Barely receiving Pleasure is nothing. It will rather aggravate your Condemnation, if what hath affected you, hath not influenced you. Are you then become real, practical, inward, uniform Christians? If not; you are now going to have another Teacher: mind what you are taught in another manner, or you are undone for ever. *But, Beloved, we are perſuaded better Things of you, and Things that accompany Salvation, though we thus ſpeak* *.

Yet still, supposing you are truly religious, a further exceedingly material Question is, To what Degree in Religion are you arrived? Is it a confirmed, lively, increasing one; or faint and tottering? Unless you gain Ground, you will lose it: if you are negligent, you will fall: and if you imagine yourselves as pious and virtuous, as you need be; you are almost as far from it, as you can be. Search then

* Heb. vi. 9.

diligently, ſtrengthen what is weak, and add what is deficient; *that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing* *. Whatever due Inſtruction I may have omitted to give you, it ought to have been, and is, your Concern to ſupply it to yourſelves: and if I have in any Meaſure performed that Duty as I ought: remember, Improvement will be expected from you, in Proportion to the Advantages, which you have enjoyed. Through God's Mercy, ſome of you, that were bad, I have Cauſe to think are become good; and ſome, that were good, become better: but alas, how few are theſe, amongſt the thouſands, of whom this Pariſh conſiſts! O may there prove to be many more, than are come to my Knowledge! Elſe I *muſt give Account* of the Succeſs of my Miniſtry *with Grief* †: for the largeſt and beſt Part of it hath been employed on You: and fain therefore would I perſuade myſelf, that it will be found to have produced a tolerable Share of good Effect. *For what is our Hope, or Joy, or Crown of rejoicing? are not even ye, in the Preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, at his Coming* ‡? But however I have failed hitherto, let me not, I beſeech you, fail now to obtain, that if ever I have ſaid any Thing to you, which raiſed any one Chriſtian Purpoſe or Deſire in your Hearts, you would at length ſet yourſelves to recollect and accompliſh it; and that if you have experienced nothing of this Kind from my Preaching, you

* James i. 4. † Heb. xiii. 17. ‡ 1 Theſſ. ii. 19.

would the more conſcientiouſly open your Breaſts to the Impreſſions of that, which you will attend next: for glad ſhall I be, to have promoted your ſpiritual Welfare, be it only by this final Requeſt; and to learn, that the Seed, which ſhall be ſown from henceforward, yields beyond Compariſon a more plentiful Harveſt, than that which preceded. For *God is my Record*, if I may preſume to adopt the Apoſtle's Words, *how greatly I long after you all, in the Bowels of Jeſus Chriſt; and this I pray, that your Love may abound yet more and more, in Knowledge and all Judgment; that ye may approve the Things that are excellent, that ye may be ſincere and without Offence till the Day of the Lord, being filled with the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt, unto the Glory and Praiſe of God* *. *Let* then *your Converſation be as becometh the Goſpel: that whether I come and ſee you, or be abſent, I may hear of your Affairs, that ye ſtand faſt in one Spirit, with one Mind* †; *not as in my Preſence only, but now much more in my Abſence, working out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling: for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do* ‡.

Underſtand me not to mean taking an abſolute and final Leave of you. *As long as I am in this Tabernacle*, to ſpeak the Language of St. *Peter*, *I* ſhall *think it meet*, if deſired and able, *to ſtir you up, by putting you in Re-*

* Phil. i. 8—11. † Ver. 27. ‡ Phil. ii. 12, 13.

membrance *. But this is the laſt Time I ſhall ſtand here in that peculiar Relation to you, which I have born ſo long. *And now* therefore, *Brethren*, to conclude with pronouncing over you the ſolemn Farewell of St. *Paul*, *I commend you to God, and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them which are ſanctified* †. There may we meet again, never to part more!

* 2 Pet. i. 13. † Acts xx. 32.

SER-

SERMON X.

Preached before the Governors of the *London* Hoſpital, or Infirmary, for the Relief of Sick and Diſeaſed Perſons, eſpecially Manufacturers, and Seamen in Merchants-Service, *&c.* at the Pariſh-Church of St. *Lawrence-Jewry*, on *Wedneſday*, *February* 20, 1754.

ROM. xii. 8.

—*He that giveth, let him do it with Simplicity: he that ruleth, with Diligence: he that ſheweth Mercy, with Cheerfulneſs.*

OF all the benevolent Feelings, which God hath planted in our Nature, Compaſſion is the moſt valuable. For it prompts us the moſt directly to relieve the Miſerable, whoſe Diſtreſſes are much greater, than the Enjoyments of the Happy can be here below: and yet, without the Call of this tender Sympathy, we ſhould, far oftener than we do, turn our Eyes from them, and leave them to their Fate. Perſons of all Ranks are frequently in Circumſtances, that demand Pity. But the higher

higher Part of the World have it more in their Power to avoid Sufferings, than the loweſt: and it is eaſier to aſſiſt the latter effectually. Their Poverty alone, indeed, if they are well able to provide themſelves Neceſſaries, wants no Aſſiſtance. It is one requiſite State in the Scale of Things, appointed by the Wiſdom of Providence: and allows them a very comfortable Enjoyment of Life. But if Work be ſcarce, or their Families large, they may be grievouſly ſtraitened, even in Health: and in Sickneſs, their Condition, though ſingle, is lamentable; and, when married, often extremely ſo. If only a Child be ſick, they have ſeldom Leiſure to attend it duly; but if the Parents are ſick, all the Children muſt be neglected; and the Labour, which uſed to maintain them, ceaſe. They are deſtitute, both of Knowledge what to do, and of Money to procure Directions and Medicines, nay, perhaps, proper Food. They follow, at random, the Suggeſtions of Neighbours, no wiſer than themſelves: or, after languiſhing long, and growing worſe than they needed, have Recourſe for Cure, often to ignorant, often to rapacious Creatures; who, if they chance to recover, yet ſtrip them of all, and load them with Debts, that diſquiet the reſt of their Days; and too commonly drive them to deſtructive Cordials, which unhappily the moſt Needy can afford; or deſperate Acts of Injuſtice to others, or Violence to their own Perſons.

Religion,

Religion, Humanity, common Prudence, loudly require us to reſcue them from ſuch dreadful Evils. For they are our Brethren, and God hath committed them to our Care: we owe to their Induſtry all that we enjoy; and, without their Aid, ſhould be far more helpleſs than they. It is true, many of them fall into Diſeaſes and Want through their own Faults: and Bounty to them may encourage thoſe Faults. But many alſo, with the utmoſt Diligence and Parſimony, can but juſt live. Now ſurely ſuch ought to have the Comfort of knowing, that in all Events they ſhall be ſecured from Extremities. And, even could we diſtinguiſh the Blameable from the reſt, we ſhould make Allowances to them, for Ignorance, Frailty, Temptation: as we hope God and Man will to Us, who have leſs Excuſe. While they are well, indeed, it will be right to let them fare more hardly: but neglecting them, when they are ill, is expoſing them to periſh, is next to murdering them. Their Diſtemper, it muſt be owned, is from God's Hand: but he commands us, both by Nature and Scripture, to alleviate it, if we can: and doubtful Conſequences afford no Plea to the contrary. How do we know, that Mercy, exerciſed prudently, will not reclaim them; or that refuſing it will prove a Warning to Them, or to others?

If then the ſick Poor ought to have Relief, what is the beſt Manner of giving it? Barely ſup-

ſupplying them with Food, is doing little or nothing towards their Cure: and every Day's Continuance of their Sickneſs, that can be prevented, is juſt ſo much unneceſſary Addition of Wretchedneſs to themſelves, and of Damage to the Publick. If we furniſh them with Money alſo, they will often miſapply it. If we procure them Advice and Medicines: diſperſed, and unprovided, and unteachable as they are, the Charge will uſually be heavy, and the Succeſs very uncertain. Therefore Parochial Infirmaries have been erected, where they could; and may be of conſiderable Uſe, but far inferior to larger Hoſpitals. They are much more liable to the bad Influence of private Intereſt and Partiality: Governors, Practitioners, Attendants, will ſeldom be near ſo well qualified; and the Coſt of each Patient will be vaſtly greater. Publick Hoſpitals then are evidently the moſt deſirable. There, Cheats will never apply: proper Objects may have what is needful, as ſoon as ever they are indiſpoſed: if able, may go on with their Buſineſs; if not, may be taken into the Houſe. Thus, in both Caſes, they partake of the united Skill of learned Perſons, almoſt as largely as the higheſt of their Betters. And, in the latter Caſe, their Families are diſburdened of them: their Lodgings are much quieter and wholeſomer, than their own can eaſily be: their Phyſick is duly given, their Diet and whole Regimen ſuited to their Condition; and the Symptoms and Turns of their Diſeaſe watched

watched over, and reported, by experienced Nurſes. Then further, the Art of healing is improved in theſe Places beyond all others: not, as the Vulgar ſometimes fancy, by raſh Trials of dangerous Experiments; but by frequent Occaſions for able Profeſſors to conſult, and ingenious Candidates to learn from them, to the common Advantage of all Ranks of Men.

But, though publick Infirmaries are in general highly uſeful; and have accordingly been ſet up in many Parts of this Nation lately; and in none, I believe, laid down again, or diſliked: yet they are the moſt uſeful in the moſt populous Cities. For to theſe, helpleſs Wretches need not be ſent from a Diſtance, but are always at hand in them: they contain many poor Strangers, that come occaſionally; many Sojourners, that have no legal Settlements. And beſides, even ſuch as have, are leſs known to the Rich, and leſs minded, amidſt their Hurry of Buſineſs or Pleaſure, than in Villages or ſmaller Towns. Now Multitudes of theſe are continually falling ſick, and receiving Hurts: and, if left to themſelves in their miſerable Cellars and Garrets, muſt ſuffer beyond Conception, and moſt of them die. As therefore this is, to ſpeak moderately, one of the largeſt of Cities; and the buſieſt alſo, which increaſes Accidents; Hoſpitals are peculiarly neceſſary for it.

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Some may think there were enough before the Erection of Ours. But the contrary is manifeſt: for the others are not emptier ſince. And though, inſtead of ſix Beds, with which it began thirteen Years ago, it hath now one hundred and thirty-five, which have been filled near nine Times each during the laſt Year; yet a large Proportion of pitiable Objects, brought in or recommended, have been rejected for want of Room: how cutting a Diſappointment to them, you may, by ſuppoſing their Misfortunes your own, in ſome low Degree imagine. Of Out-Patients, there have been nine thouſand four hundred within the ſame Time; and were, on the firſt of *January* laſt, ſixteen hundred on the Books: which great Reſort, a remarkable Diſtinction of our Hoſpital from all others, proves the Neceſſity of it, particularly in that Quarter; and, at the ſame Time, the good Succeſs of the Remedies adminiſtered in it. But ſtill that Succeſs would be vaſtly augmented, if more could be taken in: becauſe from a Diſtance many cannot come at all for Advice; and few will come for it ſo often, or follow it ſo ſtrictly, as they ſhould: nor will they be either dieted or nurſed at home near ſo well.

It may ſeem an Objection to the Enlargement of Hoſpitals, that the Inhabitants within the Bills of Mortality are leſſening. But alas, their Diſeaſes and Diſtreſſes are increaſing at the ſame Time. Intemperance, eſpecially

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in Spirituous Liquors, and Debauchery, deſtroy their Health and Fruitfulneſs: Love of Pleaſures and Amuſements, makes them idle and neceſſitous; and Contempt of Religion leaves bad Inclinations unreſtrained. Were we wiſe, the utmoſt Zeal would be ſhewn to ſtop this Torrent of Folly and Sin, by the Authority, and above all by the Example, of Superiors: which, eſpecially when it is bad, the next beneath them will imitate; and ſo downwards, to the loweſt of all. For it is a ſtrange Defect in Policy, not to think of preventing Perſons from making themſelves uſeleſs and wretched, but only of reſtoring them to a Condition of doing it again. But unleſs the former be vigorouſly attempted by well-adviſed Methods, of which God grant us better Hope, there will be a growing Demand for Hoſpitals, till the Number of our People is reduced yet further.

Still it may be alledged, that the Burthen of ſupporting them, inſtead of reſting, as it doth, on a few, ſhould be laid on the Community by a Law. But the Poor cannot make this Law; nor doth it appear that the Rich will: not to ſay, that if it were made, the Charitable would loſe one principal Method of ſatisfying their own Minds, as well as others, that they are truly ſuch. And beſides, how are we ſure that the Care would be ſo effectual, and the Charge, indeed our own Share of it, leſs, or ſo little, under the Management of

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legal Officers, *taking the Overſight by Conſtraint, or for Lucre,* as of thoſe who take it *willingly, and of a ready Mind* ?* However, at preſent, Hoſpitals muſt depend on voluntary Gifts, as they have done in Time paſt.

Not that this excellent Inſtitution began early in the World: which may ſeem very ſtrange. But poſſibly Diſtempers were formerly fewer. And certainly, among the antient Heathens, Tenderneſs of Heart towards the Wretched was no common Virtue †. Nor did it among the *Jews* extend far: though *Moſes* enjoins it towards all Men, repeatedly and pathetically ‡. But our bleſſed Saviour, the ſingular Good-nature of whoſe Doctrine is one ſtrong Evidence of its divine Original, beſides teaching more efficaciouſly, than had ever been done before, the Obligation of mutual Love in general, hath particularly inforced Mercy to the Sick, by his Miracles of healing, by his Parable of the good *Samaritan* ‖, by

* 1 Pet. v. 2. † The Direction and Practice of *Cato* the Cenſor was, to ſell Slaves, when they became diſeaſed, or otherwiſe unfit for Labour. *Cato de Re Ruſtica, Plut. in Cat.* And *Suetonius* ſaith, that in the Reign of *Claudius*, (when the *Romans* were poliſhed in the higheſt Degree, and Philoſophy had tried its utmoſt Influence upon them,) ſome expoſed their ſick Slaves to periſh in the Iſle of *Æſculapius* at *Rome:* on which Account the Emperor ordered, that expoſing them ſhould be deemed giving them their Liberty, if they recovered; and that, if any choſe rather to put them to Death, it ſhould be puniſhed, as Murder. *Suet. in Claud.* c. 25.

‡ Exod. xxii. 21. xxiii. 9, 12. Lev. xix. 33, 34. xxv. 25, 36, 37. Deut. x. 19. xxiv. 14, 15, 17—22. xxvii. 19.

‖ Luke x. 30—37.

his affecting Description of his own future Behaviour at the great Day of Judgment *. In consequence of this, we find the primitive Christians the most benevolent of Men †: and the Affection of their Successors to each other, a Subject of general Wonder ‡. We find those of *Rome*, who were the richest, sending Alms to their Brethren throughout the Earth ‖: and those of *Alexandria* and *Carthage*, in the Desolations of a dreadful Plague, ministring to the Infected with astonishing Courage, while the Heathens gave Proofs of the most shocking Neglect and Barbarity §. Nay, those of the whole Eastern Empire, just after the several Cities of it had been persecuting them, in the Reign of *Maximin*, were the only Persons, who assisted others in the double Distress of Pestilence and Famine; attending on the Dying, burying the Dead, feeding the Hungry, without Distinction: which they did continually, with such Tenderness and Bounty in every Respect, that They and their God were publickly celebrated and honoured for it by all Men **. Nor do Christian Writers alone ascribe to them this Cha-

* Matth. xxv. 31—46.

† Acts ii. 44, 45. iv. 32—37. xi. 27—30. xxiv. 17. Rom. xv. 25, 26. 2 Cor. viii. 1—4. ix. 1, 2. Col. i. 4. 1 Thess. iv. 9. 2 Thess. i. 3. 1 Tim. v. 10. Philem. Ver. 7. Rev. ii. 19. Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. §. 1, 2, 55.

‡ Tert. Apol. c. 39, 42.

‖ Dionys. ap. Euseb. H. E. l. 4. c. 23. & l. 7. c. 5.

§ Dionys. ap. Euseb. H. E. l. 7. c. 22. Cypr. Vit. per Pontium, p. 5.

** Euseb. H. E. l. 9. c. 8.

racter. The profane *Lucian* acknowledges and ridicules their plentiful Almsgiving *. The apostate Emperor *Julian* confesses, that the Worshippers of his Gods disregarded their own Poor, and the Christians maintained those of both Professions. He gives Exhortations to the former, undeniably taken out of the New Testament, to amend, and imitate the *Galileans* in this and many other Points. But, distrusting their Effect, he had begun to appropriate large Revenues to the Support of the Credit of Paganism, against the Influences of the Charity of Christians †. Nor were these bountiful only to make and preserve Converts: for they continued so after their Faith became the reigning one ‡. Then, for it was impracticable before, a vast Variety of beneficent Foundations, and, amongst them, Hospitals for the Sick, Things unknown to preceding Ages ||, rose from the private Liberalities of Believers §, and were authorised and

* De morte Peregrini, p. 996, 997, 998. Ed. Bourdelot. Par. 1615.

† Julian. Fragm. Ep. p. 290, 305. Ep. 49. p. 429, &c. Ed. Spanh. Lipf. 1696. Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 3. p. 101, 102. Ed. Billii, Par. 1630. Sozomen. Hist. Eccl. l. 5. c. 16.

‡ Chrysost. Hom. 66. in Matth. p. 658. Tom. 7. Ed. Montf.

|| The Word *Valetudinarium* is in several *Roman* Authors: but seems to mean only a Receptacle for the sick Servants of a Family, in or near the House.

§ *Jerom* saith, that *Fabiola*, a wealthy Christian Widow, of a noble *Roman* Family, who died in his Time, first erected a publick Infirmary: *Prima omnium νοσοκομεῖον instituit, in quo aegrotantes colligeret de plateis, & consumpta languoribus atque inedia miserorum membra foveret.* Ep. 84. Ed. Bened. 77. Ed. Veron.

and regulated by the civil Power*: which have spread wherever the Gospel hath spread: and make one principal Glory of our own Church, our own Times, and the Reign of our gracious Sovereign. These Facts, I hope, will recommend, not only Charity to Christians, but Christianity to charitable Persons: and shew the Wisdom of learning from Scripture the proper Directions for carrying on the good Work, which we are met to countenance.

Now there can be no better Directions, than those of the Text. For it comprehends the three necessary Points: a due Provision, a vigilant Superintendence, a willing Execution.

I. A due Provision. *He that giveth, let him do it with Simplicity:* fairly allowing every right Motive its full Effect upon him. The mere Instinct of Pity will operate irregularly, and sometimes hurtfully. Mere worldly Prudence will be generally misled by present Self-Interest. A Sense of moral Fitness, without the Sanction of divine Authority, will scarce ever produce much Fruit, in common Soils at least. And the Religion of Reason alone, will but seldom furnish Precepts determinate

ron. And *Gregory the Presbyter*, in his Life of *Nazianzen*, saith, that *Basil*, who lived in the same Age with *Jerom*, built a large Hospital for Lepers, with Charity Money, which he collected for that Purpose.

* Cod. l. 1. tit. 2. leg. 15, 19, 22. tit. 3. leg. 18.

enough, or excite Hopes and Fears powerful enough, to ſupply the Deficiency. Doubtleſs we Chriſtians ought ſincerely to eſteem thoſe, who, from any true Principle, benefit their Fellow-creatures: but at the ſame Time earneſtly to pray God, that he would make them *altogether ſuch as we are* *. The Goſpel weakens no other Inducement: and adds ſuch perſuaſive ones of its own, that whoever embraces it *in Simplicity and godly Sincerity* †, muſt be charitable. And hence I preſume it is, that the Word, tranſlated *Simplicity* in the Text, ſignifies Liberality in ſeveral Places of the New Teſtament ‡, and perhaps in no Book written before it. For one, who is a Chriſtian *in Singleneſs of Heart* ||, can neither covet immoderate Wealth, nor hoard up againſt improbable Accidents, nor make falſe Pleas of Inability, nor examine the Merits of the Diſtreſſed with Rigor §, nor confine his Alms to ſome favourite Objects of Beneficence; but will fairly conſider the Claims of every different Sort. And none hath better, than this Hoſpital, on various Accounts.

It ſtands remote from others, in the Neighbourhood of innumerable Mariners and Artificers, whom their Manner of Life ſubjects to

* Acts xxvi. 29. † 2 Cor. i. 12. ‡ 2 Cor. viii. 2. ix. 11, 13. Jam. i. 5. || Acts ii. 46. Eph. vi. 5. Col. iii. 22. § *Le Clerc* apprehends, that the Apoſtle meant particularly to give this Direction: which ſome of the early Chriſtians carried to a great Length. See *the Shepherd of Hermas*, l. 2. mand. 2.

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many grievous Caſualties and Diſeaſes. Of theſe it takes Care, if the Caſe ſo require, (and there have been three hundred and thirty ſuch during the laſt Year,) without any Recommendation: but in all Caſes, without any Payment on their Admiſſion, or any Security for their Burial, ſhould they die: which two Demands exclude the moſt Helpleſs from other Hoſpitals, and throw them on Ours: but the Advantage increaſes far beyond the Expence.

Its Support hath always been from ſpontaneous Gifts: and, within the Compaſs of the annual Account lately publiſhed, they have fallen ſhort of the Diſburſements by three hundred and fifty Pounds. Now it could not ſubſiſt, much leſs be enlarged as it ought, were this Diminution to continue. But we truſt it is only temporary; proceeding from Zeal to carry on with Speed a ſeparate, but important Part of the general Deſign. A new Structure, diſcreetly poſtponed at firſt, is now erecting, in a purer Air, with larger and loftier Rooms, yet wholly contrived for Health not Shew, in which far greater Numbers will be far better accommodated. And, indeed, the Erection of it is a double Charity, by employing the healthy Poor, as well as providing for the unhealthy. On this near eighteen hundred Pounds have been laid out, in the laſt Twelvemonth, more than hath been received in that Time: and only two hundred ninety-three

remain in Bank. The Friends to it therefore, I hope, will not fail to conſider, that the ſooner it is finiſhed, the ſooner the Money already expended on it will become uſeful, and the Charge of having two Houſes at once will ceaſe. And ſuch, as were not Friends to it, ought to conſider alſo, that, while others are contributing to the Building, the Fund for the Patients will ſink, unleſs they ſupply the Deficiency. When it is once compleated, though larger Donations will be wanted, than before it was begun; becauſe more Perſons will be admitted than can now: yet, as the whole will be directly applied to their Uſe; the Benefit of the Hoſpital, in Proportion to the Coſt, will be much more viſible, than it hath been hitherto.

II. The Second Point is, a vigilant Superintendence. *He that ruleth, with Diligence,*

Some of the Governors, indeed, cannot be expected to attend, unleſs on Occaſions very extraordinary. The mere Honour of their Names in the Liſt of Subſcribers will do great Service; and their occaſional Recommendations and Vindications of the Charity, yet greater. But the Aſſiſtance of able and experienced Perſons, as Viſitors, (an Office to be faithfully diſcharged, when undertaken) and of conſiderable Perſons alſo at the weekly and other Boards, will be a meritorious Addition to their Con-

Contributions: and the more, as only the Desire of doing Good can render it agreeable to them. This will satisfy the World, that every thing goes on well. For good Government is what distributes properly the Nourishment, that Benefactions furnish; and animates the whole Machine: of which, Care or Neglect will wonderfully augment or frustrate the Use. In a System compounded of so many Parts, Precaution to obviate Disorders, or Interposition to rectify them, must be continual. And where no positive Faults appear, admirable Improvements may be invented, or imported from other Places. Indeed Proposals for that End should not be rashly made: but very candidly considered, when they are made, and yet not over-warmly pressed. For if they are right, in Time they will prevail. And eager Contentions are solicitously to be avoided in all Points: Partialities of every Sort to be laid aside: the Advantage of the House to be solely kept in view; and even that pursued with Gentleness, and the most obliging mutual Regards. But though Dissension, like an acute Distemper, threatens the most loudly, and brings on the suddenest Danger; yet, if the Crisis be favourable, all may be as well or better than before: but languid Supineness is a chronical Disease, that proceeds with slow and silent, but surer Steps, towards a Dissolution. The former happens oftenest in the Beginning of these Undertakings; and I hope you are compleatly got over it: the latter in

the Progreſs; of which therefore beware. Mark out and engage fit Perſons to join with you, and ſucceed you, as acting Governors: infuſe the Spirit of right Management into them, and inſtruct them in the fundamental Articles of it.

One Article, of almoſt unſpeakable Moment, is Cleanlineſs: which you have lately conſulted with much Prudence, in providing Change of freſh Beds. But frequent Renewal of freſh Air is found to be another indiſpenſable Requiſite for the Recovery, and even the Preſervation of Health, eſpecially when Numbers are confined together in the ſame Room. Yet few ſufficiently know this: and Attendants, to ſave themſelves Trouble, are unwilling to regard it: and the Change muſt be made, in the Caſe of the Sick, with no little Caution. An excellent Man *, who hath long been an Ornament to his Profeſſion as a Clergyman, and to his Country as a Philoſopher, hath ſhewn the beſt Means, as well as the Neceſſity, of making Proviſion for this Purpoſe: and will gladly give minuter Directions; which may be of conſiderable Benefit in your preſent Houſe, and of much greater in fitting up your new one.

But there is another Article, on which I muſt beg Leave to enlarge a little more: that of religious Worſhip and Inſtruction. Prayers

* Dr. *Stephen Hales.*

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are read on two Week-days: but they ſhould be read, and a Sermon preached, on the Lord's-Day alſo; as, I believe, is done in every other Hoſpital. The Omiſſion will be interpreted, if continued, a Slight on Chriſtianity: and cannot fail to grieve extremely all the pious Part of the Sick: whereas publick Devotions and Exhortations then, will not only comfort theſe, but probably awaken many of the reſt to a Reverence of the Day: which, being their only one of Leiſure, muſt be the beſt of their Lives, or the worſt *. But bare general Forms have often ſmall Efficacy. And therefore a diſtinct perſonal Application ought moreover to be made to each of them: not to fill their Heads with empty Words, or with idle, and much leſs with hurtful Notions, but to excite in their Souls a ſtrong and practical Senſe, that He, from whom they are, and on whom they depend here and hereafter, hath ſent from Heaven to *teach them, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, they ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World, looking for that bleſſed Hope, and the glorious Appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt: who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity; and purify unto himſelf a peculiar People, zealous of good Works* †.

* On this Admonition, the late Lord Viſcount *Folkeſtone* gave privately an Allowance for performing the *Sunday* Service, till the Hoſpital provided for it.

† Tit. ii. 12, 13, 14.

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These Doctrines, proposed to them compassionately and discreetly, when their Condition permits them to reflect without Hazard, will give to the Well-disposed inexpressible Consolation; and to the Worst no more than useful Terror. A penitent Conviction of their past Sins will instantly render them humble, contented, orderly, and observant in all Respects: it must, if they die, have some good Influence on their future State; and may have the very best on many By-standers. But if they recover, as eight in nine do, fixing it deeply in their Hearts will prompt them to every Thing right, for themselves, and all with whom they are concerned; will restrain them from every Thing wrong, and make them happy under all Restraints and all Afflictions, by the Assurance of an eternal Recompense: which inestimable Effects nothing else can have. Possibly scarce any Principles of Christianity or Morality have ever been taught them: for, in this Land of abused Liberty, That is determined by Chance, or arbitrary Choice. Possibly none ever will, unless it be here: and here they may be inculcated on them with peculiar Advantage. They have Leisure to think: are kept cool and low: have not their vicious Companions round them, to deride Seriousness; but Fellow-sufferers, to applaud it. They experience the Value of Religion and Virtue: for to these they owe the tender Care, that is taken of them. Pious Books are read in the Wards, by such as can,

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to the reſt: which will be much better minded, after ſeparate Exhortations made to each. And a ſmall Gift of ſhort admonitory Tracts, judiciouſly choſen for them, when they go away, will tend very powerfully, through God's Bleſſing, to perpetuate the Impreſſions, which they have received. At leaſt we ſhall thus have tried what, even in worldly Wiſdom, we ought. A conſiderable Share of the Poverty and Diſeaſes, and ſome Share of the Accidents, that bring Perſons to Hoſpitals, ariſes from their Wickedneſs: and therefore amending them is the Way to prevent their Return thither. Publick Wealth and Strength conſiſts, partly in the Numbers, partly in the Uſefulneſs of the People. Now both will bear a near Proportion to their Morals: on which alſo the private Security and domeſtick Enjoyment of Life almoſt intirely reſts. And many of the poor Wretches cured, if they go away as vile as they come, will have Cauſe to wiſh, with their Families and the Community, that their Diſtempers had proved mortal. Even ſuppoſing Men could be kept ſufficiently in Order, againſt their Judgments and Wills, by Dread of temporal Puniſhments; their Situation muſt be a very uneaſy one: whereas thankful Obedience to a juſt Ruler, and gracious Rewarder, is the moſt pleaſing Motive imaginable. But evidently they cannot: nor any where ſo little, as where the Limitation of the Magiſtrate's Authority by Law is the ſtricteſt. And they muſt have a

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ſtrangely ſelf-denying Zeal againſt Religion, who had rather, that thoſe about them ſhould deſpiſe it and be miſchievous, than revere it and be harmleſs.

Indeed the Performance of all, that I have been recommending, will require ſome Addition of Expence: but not much in Compariſon, not more than is allowed elſewhere, not without receiving a valuable Conſideration in Return. Good Perſons will contribute to it; will, if deſired, bear the whole of it; will be more liberal to the other Parts of the Charity for it: the Reputation of the Houſe will be heightened by it; which, I muſt tell you, ſuffers from delaying ſo neceſſary a Proviſion.

I would only ſay further on the ſecond Head, that when Patients are diſcharged, the good Advice of the Board, and of the Governors who recommended them, may have vaſt Weight with them: eſpecially if it be inforced by ſome Aſſiſtance, either from the common Stock, or private Liberality, for preſent Support, till they get Strength and Buſineſs.

III. The third and laſt Point is a willing Execution. *He that ſheweth Mercy, with Cheerfulneſs.* For *ſhewing Mercy* is underſtood by the beſt Commentators * to ſignify

* Ελεῶντας hîc vocat, qui ægrotis aderant. GROT.

here,

here, what the like Phraſe comprehends in the Hiſtory of the benevolent *Samaritan* *, miniſtering perſonally to the Objects of the Charity: and *Cheerfulneſs* † denotes Goodwill, both to Them and to the Employment. All depends at laſt on the Care and Kindneſs of Thoſe, who are engaged in this immediate Application: in which they muſt indeed ſee melancholy and ſhocking Sights, and perform low and diſguſtful Offices. But Religon hath the Secret to make every Thing agreeable: and their Occupations are ſo much more beneficial to Mankind, and better fitted to improve their own Hearts, than Providence hath allotted to moſt others, that they have Cauſe on Reflexion to be ſatisfied, and even pleaſed, with their Condition.

The general Duty of all, who attend on this good Work is, induſtriouſly to further, and in no Reſpect to counteract, the Intent of it: to abſtain from provoking, diſcouraging, profane or immodeſt, Behaviour and Diſcourſe: and to deter or diſſuade, ſo far as they can, every one concerned, from whatever is faulty. The particular Duty of Him, who miniſters in Holy Things, hath been already intimated. Phyſicians and Surgeons are habituated to Humanity and Decency: and will undoubtedly ſhew, and require that all under them ſhew, as much of it to theſe poor Creatures, as to

* Luke x. 37. † Προθυμία hoc loco promptitudinem animi ſignificat. GROT.

their

their Betters. The Officers of the Houſe muſt not only be upright, frugal, diligent, themſelves; but ſee, both that inferior Servants be aſſiduous and punctual, faithful and impartial, gentle and tender, which I underſtand is expreſsly charged on them; and likewiſe, that the Patients conform to the Rules preſcribed them. Failures in the very loweſt Part of the Management, and that ſeem but ſmall, may be extremely hurtful to the Sick: and, though they are not, will be mentioned by them in ſtrong Terms, when they come out: and ſuch Reports will reach their Recommenders and others, and in all Likelihood be aggravated, to the unknown Diſadvantage of the Charity.

But the Characters and Conduct, both of the Governors and of thoſe whom they intruſt, give ſuch Aſſurance, that all is and will be carried on well, that I proceed, in Concluſion, boldly to aſk your generous Contributions to this excellent Undertaking.

Moſt of the piteous Objects, for whom it provides, become ſuch in working for You. Long Voyages, or dangerous Enterpriſes, or Employments liable to Miſchances, or Labour on unwholeſome Materials, or earneſt active Induſtry, or cloſe Confinement and ſedentary Diligence, are the uſual Cauſes of their Sufferings; and the principal Sources of our national Riches and Grandeur, of the Conveniencies

niencies and Elegancies and Enjoyments of Life. So that indeed they are Martyrs to the publick Service. And were it only to the publick Luxury, the Fault would not be in Them, but in you, their Superiors, who diſpoſe of them ſo: and who ought not ſurely to let them lie unrelieved in Languiſhment or Torture, for having furniſhed you the Means of Pomp and Delicacy. If you do, you are ſadly unworthy of the kind Providence, which hath exalted you above them, to be its own Stewards for their Welfare.

But they are more directly the Servants of You, Merchants and Traders: to whom they are Inſtruments of earning Wealth and Honours, for a bare Subſiſtence. Think then, what you ſhould feel in their Situation, were you neglected after all, when Illneſs comes upon you. Think alſo, that induſtrious Perſons are more in Number for every one ſuch, whoſe Life is ſaved, or who is ſooner or more perfectly reſtored to Health. Theſe Conſiderations will clearly ſhew you, that all Perſons of Eminence in Trade ſhould be liberal Subſcribers; and the reſt occaſional, if they cannot be ſtated, Benefactors. The preſent is one Occaſion. The Banker, or the Box, or any Friend of the Hoſpital, will afford you other Opportunities, when you pleaſe. And you well know, that ſmall Sums frequently given, make a large Total: beſides that even the

the Widow's Mite ſingly is precious in the Sight of God *.

Some, of various Ranks, may not know Objects enough for their Charity: may not have Leiſure or Convenience to inquire after them: may not care to truſt or trouble others with doing it. Here then is a Way open for ſuch to beſtow, unqueſtionably well, juſt as much as they wiſh. And they ſhould give the more, becauſe they are put to no Difficulties, in order to give. Others have had Servants, or Dependents, or Neighbours, under Cure in the Infirmary, of whom they would elſe have taken the Charge themſelves. Now theſe ought at leaſt to reimburſe the Infirmary: for ſtill they will be Gainers by it; but elſe, they will in effect defraud it.

Perſons profeſſing Religion cannot but be ſenſible, that were they to let Unbelievers excel them in Acts of Bounty, it would afford them ſuch a Triumph, as Heaven forbid they ſhould ever have. And Perſons indifferent or unfavourable to Religion, moſt of them profeſs the higheſt Regard to Benevolence: as indeed, if doing Good to Men be the only Homage they will pay to God, ſurely they ought to be very abundant in it. We invite them therefore to a fair Contention with us on this Head. But at the ſame Time we muſt admoniſh them, that without moral Self-Go-

* Mark xii. 41—44.

vernment,

vernment, and dutiful Piety, they will on the whole do Harm to their Fellow-creatures: or could that be otherwiſe, will fail of becoming inwardly ſuch, as their all-wiſe Creator expects. And it is grievous to think, that with ſome Qualities ſo amiable, by the wilful or careleſs Neglect of the reſt, they ſhould deſerve Condemnation, inſtead of Reward. Still *they ſhall obtain* more *Mercy*, than if they had not been *merciful* *: and therefore, however wicked in other Reſpects, it is highly their Intereſt to be virtuous in this. But *Charity ſhall cover the Multitude of Sins* †, only when it proceeds from an efficacious Reſolution of univerſal Amendment. And then it is peculiarly, both a proper thankful Claim to God's Promiſe of Forgiveneſs, and likewiſe a proper Compenſation to Men for paſt Injuries and Omiſſions: if it be ſufficiently plentiful; and beſtowed on the Sufferers, when they can be found; or on the Poor, as their Subſtitutes, when they cannot. I hope therefore, that every one here, whoſe Conſcience tells him he hath offended againſt his Brethren and his heavenly Father, will take this Method of Reconciliation now without Delay.

If Deſire of increaſing your Wealth obſtructs your Liberality; you cannot, even in this World, receive near ſo much true Satisfaction from having added a little to it, as

* Matth. v. 7. † 1 Pet. iv. 8.

from having done the great Good, which that little is capable of doing. Beſides, what is to become of your Wealth? Your Heirs are to have it. And how are they to employ it? If they are to perform Acts of Beneficence with it, why may not you as well? If they are only to go on augmenting it, where is the Uſe or End of that? And if they are to ſquander it, as ſooner or later they will, you are only contriving to make yourſelf and them a Reproach, in contrary Ways.

Suppoſe then, on the other Hand, it be Pleaſures and Amuſements, that intercept your Charity: of what Kind are they? Many faſhionable ones are mean, irrational, deſtructive of the Time, Fortune, Health, Temper, Principles, of thoſe who delight in them. What will be your Credit and Weight now, what the Eſteem of your Memory, and the State of your Poſterity, an Age or two hence, if you live, and teach Them to live, only or chiefly to ſuch Things? At leaſt intermix with them ſomewhat worthy of Notice and of Praiſe. Retrench a Sin or a Folly, and give the Coſt to theſe poor Creatures. Put out of your Power, by ſpending well, what elſe you would have ſpent ill. This will be of double Service to you.

But poſſibly you devote the Superfluity of your Income to innocent Entertainments, Ornaments, Decorations. And is it fitting then, that

that you ſhould be humouring your Fancy, or diſplaying your Taſte, while Wretches around you are periſhing and unaſſiſted? But ſuch Things, you will ſay, employ the Poor, and ſo do Good. Why, allowing that they do Good; which however is not true, without ſeveral Exceptions: yet the Poor, who are incapable of Employment, ſhould be conſidered firſt. Others indeed *may* ſuffer, if you overlook them: but theſe *are* ſuffering. Others will make ſome Shift; perhaps a better for the Publick, if not for themſelves too: but theſe can make none. Beſides, you may be a great deal ſurer, that the Good, to which Self-Indulgence cannot prompt you, is meant for Good: and it will procure you far more Eſteem from the Worthy and Conſiderate. Some of the Vain and Thoughtleſs perhaps may affect to ridicule you for it. But only avoid injudicious Projects of Beneficence, and Degrees of Liberality inconſiſtent with other Obligations or Proprieties: and you will be abundantly ſupported, within and without. Private Parſimony, when moderate, and combined with Generoſity in Matters of publick Concern, was highly celebrated, even by Heathens, in former Ages *; and will to the lateſt be an Honour, and ſelfiſh Pomp and Luxury a Diſgrace, to all Nations and all Perſons, that are noted for either. The Givers of memorable ſingle Benefactions indeed will

* Cic. pro L. Flacco. § 12. Hor. Od. 2. 15. 10—20. Sat. 2 2. 102—105.

be longeſt and moſt extenſively reſpected: but ſuch as join with others, will alſo have Praiſe for it, equal to their modeſt Deſires. In Our Hoſpital particularly, their Names and Contributions are recorded, and openly propoſed for Imitation: while yet they, who chuſe it, may be as ſecret in their Donations to this Charity, as to any.

Poſſibly you may think, it will be ſufficiently carried on without your Help. But what if every Body were to think ſo? Beſides, how do you know it will? And if it would, your Concern is, not ſo much that good Works be done, as that You do your Share towards them.

But you give to other Charities, to other Hoſpitals. And ſo do many of the bountiful Friends to this. Why then may not, why then ſhould not, You be ſuch a Friend to it likewiſe? But, at the very leaſt, be not an Enemy. That we demand, as Juſtice. If we are wrong in any Thing, we ſhall be glad to correct it: if deficient, to ſupply it. If we think we excel in any Thing, we heartily wiſh we could excel in nothing. If we have chanced to take a Name, that may ſeem too lofty; we had rather never have taken it, than have given Offence by what was intended, not to arrogate the leaſt Pre-eminence above our elder Siſters; but only to expreſs, in the ſtrongeſt Manner, how numerous the Objects, for whom Proviſion is wanted, were; and to whom we princi-

principally truſted for the Means of relieving them.

Let us all therefore go on, amicably as well as diligently, in this and every Method of leſſening Miſery, and promoting Goodneſs and Happineſs, in the World, from an humble Senſe of Duty to the Maker of it: till the Exerciſe of the Virtues, adapted to our preſent ſuffering State, improve our Souls into a Fitneſs for that approaching Time of Enjoyment; when *God ſhall wipe away all Tears from our Eyes, and there ſhall be no more Death, nor Sorrow, or Crying; neither ſhall there be any more Pain* *.

* Rev. xxi. 4.

SERMON XI.

Preached in the Church of St. *Mary-le-Bow*, *December* 4, 1754, at the Yearly Meeting of the Religious Societies.

MALACHI iii. 16.

Then they, that feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a Book of Remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name.

THIS Prophecy was delivered long after the Return of the *Jews* from *Babylon*; when they had ceaſed in general to be ſuperſtitious and idolatrous, for it ſcarce accuſes them once of either Sin, but were falling into the oppoſite Extreme of Indifference about all Religion. Many of the Prieſts themſelves performed their Functions careleſsly and contemptuouſly, from a Principle of mere worldly Intereſt *; and either neglected to inſtruct others, or miſled them †. The People, partly, without Queſtion, in Conſequence of this,

* Mal. i. 6, 7, 10. † ii. 7, 8.

were

were deſtitute of Zeal for God's Worſhip; *ſaid it was a Wearineſs and ſnuffed at it*; ſacrificed to him the Refuſe of their Cattle *, *robbed him in Tithes and Offerings* †; married Heathens without Scruple ‡, broke their Marriage Vows by Adultery ‖, *dealt treacherouſly every Man againſt his Brother* §, were guilty of Oppreſſion and Perjury **: for the Prophet expreſsly charges them with all theſe Crimes. And he adds, that they not only indulged, but applauded themſelves in Impiety and Immorality: caſting off with Scorn the ſerious Regard, which they had formerly paid to unpleaſing Rules of Duty; and declaring thoſe, who had fearleſsly broke through them, the only wiſe Perſons. *Your Words have been ſtout againſt me, ſaith the Lord. Ye have ſaid, It is vain to ſerve God: and, What Profit is it, that we have kept his Ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hoſts? And now we call the Proud, happy: yea, they that work Wickedneſs are ſet up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered* ††. So that they ſtill ſeem to have profeſſed ſome Belief in a ſort of Deity: but at the ſame Time prevailed on themſelves to fancy, that he was unconcerned about their Treatment of Himſelf, or each other.

How lively a Picture this is, though drawn above two thouſand Years ago, of the Free-

* Mal. i. 13, 14. † iii. 8, &c. ‡ ii. 11. ‖ ii. 14. § ii. 10. ** iii. 5. †† iii. 13, 14, 15.

Livers and Free-Thinkers, as they have been called, of our own Age, and how large and increaſing the Numbers of them are, I need not ſay: their Practices, their Diſcourſe, their Writings, ſhew it too plainly. The Queſtion is, While They behave thus, what ſhould Our Behaviour be?

Now undoubtedly earneſt Endeavours ought to be uſed for reclaiming them. And ſuch as are qualified for this Employment, eſpecially if they are likewiſe peculiarly called to it, ſhould be conſcientiouſly diligent in it: labouring to convince, both the avowedly Profane and Vicious, and all who lean towards them, of the Unreaſonableneſs and final Uncomfortableneſs of their Notions, the abſurd Raſhneſs of their Talk, the ruinous Tendency of their Conduct, even in this Life, to themſelves, to ſuch as are moſt nearly connected with them, and to the Publick: but above all, of the certain future Miſery, which they muſt bring on their own Heads, if the Maker of the World govern it with Juſtice or Wiſdom, or indeed with real Goodneſs to the whole; and for what other Ends he could poſſibly create it, is utterly inconceivable.

But though every Perſon of plain Underſtanding and upright Heart is capable of ſeeing theſe Things; and moſt may repreſent them, with good Effect, to ſuch as err through Inconſiderateneſs or bad Suggeſtions only, yet many

many are not capable of debating them with acute and artful Opponents: or if they were, ſtill would not be a Match, on other Accounts, for the Bold and Overbearing, the Contemptuous and Ridiculing. Whatever Cauſe a modeſt Man, of common Parts and Attainments, were to maintain againſt ſuch, the Combat would be unequal, and therefore is better avoided by him. But ſuppoſing him ever ſo accompliſhed; what Succeſs can be expected againſt ſcornful Levity, conceited Self-ſufficiency, hardened Unfairneſs, or ſtupid Senſuality: againſt thoſe, who, as the Apoſtle admirably deſcribes them, *walk in the Vanity of their Mind, having the Underſtanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, becauſe of the Blindneſs of their Hearts; who being paſt Feeling, have given themſelves over unto Laſciviouſneſs, to work all Uncleanneſs with Greedineſs* *. Probably formal Oppoſition would only provoke ſuch to more ſhocking Expreſſions of Irreligion at the Time, and greater Miſchievouſneſs afterwards. Therefore *Solomon*'s general Maxim and Direction is: *He that reproveth a Scorner, getteth to himſelf Shame: and he that rebuketh a wicked Man, getteth himſelf a Blot. Reprove not a Scorner, leſt he hate thee; rebuke a wiſe Man, and he will love thee* †.

* Eph. iv. 17, 18, 19. † Prov. ix. 7, 8.

Still

Still they, to whoſe Province it belongs, muſt, while there is any View of Succeſs, *inſtruct thoſe who oppoſe themſelves* *, *reprove, rebuke* †, *exhort with all Authority* ‡. And others muſt never even ſeem to countenance licentious Talk, and to give up the Cauſe of Religion when attacked; but *walk in Wiſdom toward them that are without*, that is, towards Unbelievers; take Care that *their Speech be alway with Grace, ſeaſoned with Salt* ‖; becoming, inoffenſive, diſcreet; and that they *be ready always to give an Anſwer to every Man, that aſketh them a Reaſon of the Hope that is in them* §. But uſually it will be moſt adviſeable, on all ſuch Occaſions, to ſpeak briefly: and in ſo mild a Manner, that the Party concerned may not think himſelf challenged to attempt a Reply; yet in ſo home a one, that he may feel inwardly, and if poſſible alſo laſtingly, the Force of what is ſaid to him: which he will oftener do, than he will care to own it. For *the Words of the Wiſe are as Goads, and as Nails faſtened* **. Excepting what this Act of Charity may require, we ſhall do well to *keep our Mouths, as it were with a Bridle, while the Ungodly is in our Sight:* not diſagreeably abſtaining from all Converſation, but ſtudiouſly from all which they can be likely to pervert; *keeping Silence*, where there is Danger of that, *even from good*

* 2 Tim. ii. 25. † 2 Tim. iv. 2. ‡ Tit. ii. 15.
‖ Col. iv. 5, 6. § 1 Pet. iii. 15. ** Eccleſ. xii. 11.

Words

Words *; and *not caſting our Pearls before Swine, leſt they trample them under their Feet, and turn again and rend* † the well-meaning Giver.

The Duty therefore of the Generality of Chriſtians, in Regard to the Enemies of their Faith and Practice, beſides pitying them and praying for them, goes little further, than firſt ſecuring themſelves, and thoſe who belong to them, from the Contagion; and determining with *Joſhua*, that let others *ſerve whom* or what *they chuſe, They and their Houſes will ſerve the Lord* ‡: then, as Opportunity may offer, *ſtrengthening the* reſt of their *Brethren* ‖, and uſing the Means of being mutually ſtrengthened by them, in the ſame Reſolution.

This Method, we find, the Pious and Virtuous took in the Days of *Malachi*. Doubtleſs the faithful *Prieſts and Meſſengers of the Lord of Hoſts*, whoſe *Lips* were to *keep Knowledge* §, uttered it alſo: *lifted up their Voices like Trumpets* to *ſhew the People their Tranſgreſſion, and the Houſe of Jacob their Sins* **. But of the Bulk of Believers we read, not that they were forward to diſpute, indeed we may be ſure they were backward to intermix, with Unbelievers; but only, that *they, who feared the Lord, ſpake often one to another*, certainly of Things relating to his Fear; *and the Lord*

* Pſ. xxxix. 2, 3. † Matth. vii. 6. ‡ Joſh. xxiv. 15.
‖ Luke xxii. 32. § Mal. ii. 7. ** Iſ. lviii. 1.

hearkened

hearkened and heard it, and a Book of Remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his Name.

Now in theſe Words we have it plainly ſignified to us,

I. That ſerious Conference amongſt good Perſons is peculiarly needful in thoughtleſs and irreligious Times.

II. That God obſerves and remembers, and will reward, the proper Uſe of it.

Theſe therefore ſhall be the two firſt Heads of my Diſcourſe: and then

III. I ſhall apply them to the preſent Occaſion.

I. That ſerious Conference amongſt good Perſons is peculiarly needful in thoughtleſs and irreligious Times.

Indeed we ought in all Times to ſhew by our Converſation, what we are: and ſhall, in ſome Degree, ſhew it of courſe, whether we mean to do ſo, or not. If we expreſs no Concern for the Intereſts of Piety and Virtue in our Words, we ſhall be juſtly ſuſpected of having but little in our Thoughts. *For out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth ſpeaketh. A good Man out of the good Treaſure of his Heart bringeth forth good Things: and an evil*

Man

Man out of the evil Treaſure bringeth forth evil Things *. Therefore, as it concerns us infinitely to know, of what Sort of Perſons we are, ſo we ſhould learn to judge of ourſelves by our common Talk, as well as our Actions. For as *the Fruit declareth, if the Tree have been dreſſed, ſo is the Utterance of a Conception in the Heart of Man* †. If then the Conceptions which we utter, the Sort of Language, into which we naturally run, be, though not profane or immoral, yet frothy and vain and trifling; or, though of a graver Kind, ſavour of the Intereſts of this World only: let us take Notice, that ſuch as are the Subjects that we dwell on, ſuch in all Likelihood are We. For in Caſes of much leſs Moment, we are ſufficiently apt to ſpeak of Things, about which we are ſolicitous: and is it not a very unpromiſing Sign then, if we ſeldom or never ſpeak any Thing, which proves our Solicitude for Religion and Morals? Poſſibly indeed the Prevalence of bad Cuſtom in that Reſpect, or Fear to be thought guilty of Affectation, may reſtrain us from expreſſing our Sentiments, when we could wiſh to do it. And, in the Caſe of others, we ſhould be as ready to allow this Excuſe, as there is any Colour of Reaſon. But in our own, we ſhould examine ſtrictly, what the real Truth is: and amend our Manner of converſing, for a Memorial to amend likewiſe, if there be Need, our inward Diſpoſitions.

* Matth. xii. 34, 35. † Eccluſ xxvii. 6.

By

By ſpeaking ſeriouſly on proper Occaſions, we ſhall bind ourſelves to act ſo: elſe the Inconſiſtence will ſhame us. And beſides, as we are ſtrangely apt to grow languid and flat in our good Inclinations, it is of vaſt Importance, that we ſhould ſtir up each other: which a Word in Seaſon, or a mere Hint, will often do ſurpriſingly. *Iron ſharpeneth Iron*, ſaith the wiſe King: *ſo a Man ſharpeneth the Countenance of his Friend* *; whets him up to attempt Improvements, and execute right Purpoſes. In whatever we ſet to learn, Partnerſhip, joint Advice, mutual Incitement, Imitation, Emulation if there be Room for it, have unſpeakable Force. Now we are moſt of us, God knows, but Learners in Piety, and perpetually in Danger of going back. Therefore the Scripture directs us to *conſider one another to provoke to Love and good Works, to exhort one another*, as powerful Means of *holding faſt our Faith* and Integrity *without wavering* †. So that we have not only Reaſon, but Command for the Practice: which will be further uſeful, by giving us Caution and Skill, as well as Courage and Spirit. The Snares of wicked Perſons are many and artful: but the Counſel of worthy and experienced Friends may guard us even againſt the moſt dangerous of them. The Temptations of the wicked one ſurround us continually: but Communication with thoſe, who *are not ignorant of his Devices* ‡, may effectually prevent his

* Prov. xxvii. 17. † Heb. x. 23, 24, 25. ‡ 2 Cor. ii. 11.

getting

getting Advantage of us. Even general Diſcourſe with ſuch, though we do not open ourſelves to them by particular Confidences, may be extremely beneficial to us: and eſpecial Truſt repoſed in them, on extraordinary Occaſions, with proportionable Circumſpection, may be yet more eſſentially ſerviceable.

But even where we can receive little Inſtruction, we may enjoy however great Satisfaction, from Intimacy of Acquaintance with *Them who have obtained the like precious Faith with ourſelves* *; who think and act and hope and expect as We do: from uniting in Friendſhip with thoſe now, whom God, we truſt, will unite with us in heavenly Bliſs to all Eternity. We ſhall be far ſurer of finding theſe, upright, unenvious, conſiderate, benevolent, compaſſionate, than others, who have not equal Inducements: we ſhall be able to converſe with them more frankly and openheartedly, as agreeing in our Sentiments of the principal Points, and depending on their Candour where we differ: we ſhall have the Pleaſure of eſteeming each others Characters; and rejoice in the Conſideration, that we place our chief Regard on thoſe, whom our Maker honours with His. What if they have ſome Faults or Indiſcretions? Who elſe have ſo few, or ſo ſmall? What if perhaps they are ſome of them not in all Reſpects the moſt entertaining? The Worthineſs of their Hearts

* 2 Pet. i. 1.

will

will or ought to give us a higher Pleaſure, than the brighteſt of other Accompliſhments without it. What if they have not, all of them, the greateſt Compaſs of Science, or Strength of Parts, or Knowledge of the World? They are infinitely wiſer in the neceſſary Points, than Multitudes who have. What if they cannot promote our temporal Views? They will never betray us, they will never injure us; they will always forward us in the Way to eternal Happineſs. Keeping at a Diſtance from ſuch as theſe, who, we muſt be ſenſible, merit other Treatment; and paying Court to Perſons of bad or no Principles, and blameable Lives, for the ſuperficial Agreeableneſs or miſuſed Abilities that they have, for the gay Appearance they make, or the little preſent Services, which they can do us; is ſo unequitable in itſelf, and ſo grievouſly and evidently prejudicial to the Cauſe of Religion and Probity and common Good; that they, who indulge themſelves in it, have great Need to ſuſpect the Rightneſs of their own Minds, and to apprehend imminent Danger of their being further depraved. There is indeed a Variety of Connexions in human Affairs, that may often prevent us from taking the different Notices of different Characters, which are their Due: but unleſs we honeſtly endeavour it, and contrive for it, as far as we can; and lament, not in Words of Form and Excuſe now and then, but from the Bottom of our Hearts conſtantly, that we cannot do it more; we

are

are either bad Perſons within, or very imperfectly good. With whom then, let us aſk ourſelves, do we love to aſſociate, and what Familiarities do we chuſe? Can we ſay; if not, will we qualify ourſelves for ſaying, with the Pſalmiſt: *I am a Companion of all them that fear thee, and keep thy Commandments* *. *My Delight is upon the Saints, that are in the Earth, and upon ſuch as excel in Virtue* †.

But converſing with religious People is peculiarly requiſite in irreligious Times; when *the godly Man ceaſeth*, when *the Faithful fail from among the Children of Men* ‡. In Proportion as the Number becomes ſmaller, it naturally invites to make the Union ſtricter, on various Accounts. Prevailing Neglect of God and his Commands can hardly fail to excite Anger in pious Breaſts: but Grief it muſt cauſe. *Rivers of Water run down mine Eyes, becauſe Men keep not thy Law* ‖. Now both Indignation and Sorrow require Vent. Do we then feel neither on this Occaſion? Or if we do, to whom ſhall we give them Vent, but to ſuch as will cordially ſympathize with us? Or if we want not their Acquaintance for any ſuch Reaſon, we may for another, that is more important. Our Saviour hath forewarned us, that *becauſe Iniquity ſhall abound, the Love of many ſhall wax cold* §. Were only thoſe around us in this Danger, we ſhould la-

* Pſ. cxix. 63. † Pſ. xvi. 3. ‡ Pſ. xii. 1.
‖ Pſ. cxix. 136. § Matth. xxiv. 12.

bour to prevent it: but we ourſelves run, it may be, an equal Riſque of declining, firſt into Lukewarmneſs, then into Doubt, then into Apoſtaſy. Therefore St. *Paul* directs to the ſame Remedy with that in the Text, as a ſovereign and ſpecifick Antidote. *Take Heed, Brethren, leſt there be in any of you an evil Heart of Unbelief, in departing from the living God: but exhort one another daily, leſt any of you be hardened through the Deceitfulneſs of Sin* *. Some Society we muſt have. By ſeeking that of good Perſons, we ſhall have leſs Need to ſpend much of our Time with the Bad; and be leſs hurt by that Portion, which we are obliged to give up to them. They will not ſo readily dare to tempt us, mere good Breeding will be one Check upon them, when they perceive, by the Company we keep, and the Tenour of our common Speech agreeing with it, that we have made a Chriſtian Life our deliberate Choice. And this will be a vaſt Security and Eaſe to us. It is in Effect ſaying, though meekly and modeſtly, yet ſo as will awe the Generality of the World, *Away from me, ye Wicked: I will keep the Commandments of my God* †.

Indeed ſuch Declarations, what Side we are of, by proper Expreſſions prudently introduced, and Acquaintances diſcreetly made, will not only reſtrain Sinners, from wounding our Ears with profane or licentious Talk, which will

* Heb. iii. 12, 13. † Pſ. cxix. 115.

at

at the ſame Time be ſome Diminution of their Guilt, but muſt, if they have any Reflexion and Diffidence, excite in them ſtrong Suſpicions, which through God's Bleſſing, may improve into full Perſuaſion, that the Doctrines and the Precepts, which They have ſlighted, and We reverence, are awful Realities. At leaſt it will greatly comfort all, who are engaged in the ſame Cauſe with us; contribute much to preſerve the Wavering, and ſingularly animate the Well-diſpoſed, but timorous and diſtruſtful of their own Judgments; to find, from the open and joint Profeſſions of good Perſons, that more ſuch are left, than they imagined. The Wretches, who *go about ſeeking whom they may devour* *, endeavour to perſuade them, that there are few or none. Let us ſhew them the contrary; and where they are to be met with; and that they are ſufficiently united, as well as numerous, to be a Shelter and a Refuge: convince them, that if, by adhering to their Duty they loſe the good Opinion, ſuch as it is, of ſome, they ſhall gain the much more valuable Eſteem of others: offer them our Support and Friendſhip, our Advice and Aſſiſtance. We are apt to be extremely zealous in patronizing the ſeveral Parties, that we form about other Affairs, often exceſſively trifling ones: in ſecuring Perſons to our Side, in guarding them againſt contrary Impreſſions. And can it be right, can it poſſibly conſiſt with true Piety, that

* 1 Pet. v. 8.

we ſhould have no Zeal, or next to none, for the greateſt of all Concerns; for the Honour of our heavenly Father, our bleſſed Redeemer, our gracious Sanctifier, for the preſent and future Felicity of Mankind?

But further: even to the moſt zealous, free and friendly Diſcourſe with their Well-wiſhers and Fellow-labourers may be of ſingular Benefit, by procuring them Advice, how to conduct and moderate their Zeal: which elſe may prompt them, and young Minds eſpecially, to overleap the Bounds of Diſcretion; to make Attempts without Likelihood of Succeſs, give Advantages to Adverſaries, and bring Shame on their own Heads: the Conſciouſneſs of which perhaps may drive them, from their firſt Extreme, to the oppoſite and much worſe. Here then particularly, but in many other Caſes too, they *who fear the Lord* may, by mutual Communication, help each other to preſerve at once *the Harmleſſneſs of the Dove, and the Wiſdom of the Serpent* *.

It is not by any Means neceſſary to theſe valuable Ends, that the whole Converſation of religious Perſons, when they are together, be on the Subject of Religion. The bare Choice of ſuch Company and Acquaintance is, of itſelf, a mutual Incitement to perſevere and be active. Their Diſcourſe on every Subject will be regulated by the Laws of Religion:

* Matth. x. 16.

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the Truth and Importance of it will be ſuppoſed in all they ſay; and on Occaſion will be aſſerted, and ſhewn more directly. When it is proper, they will congratulate one another on the happy State, to which they have attained through Him, *who gave himſelf for our Sins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil World* *: they will animate one another to *go on their Way rejoicing* †: they will *comfort one another* ‡, with Chriſtian Conſiderations, under Difficulties and Afflictions. The Introduction indeed of pious Phraſes, or even Sentiments, out of Time and Place, will be avoided, as improper and diſguſting, inſtead of ſerviceable. But ſtill, while we converſe together ſo freely on every Thing beſides, we need not ſurely be ſo extremely ſhy, as we commonly are, on the Head of Religion. It is true, the Name of it ſhould not be profaned, any more than that of its Author, by irreverent vulgar Uſe: but to exclude and baniſh it under Colour of Reſpect, can never be fitting. It is a ſadly falſe Delicacy, if we behave thus from Reverence to it: and a lamentable Meanſpiritedneſs, if we forbear to mention it from Fear or Shame. One would not be unſeaſonable or ſuperfluous in Profeſſions of Loyalty, of Friendſhip, of any Thing: but one would not be defective neither, and bring one's ſelf into Suſpicion, and one's Friends under Diſcouragements. The ſame then is the Rule concerning Piety: and expreſſing ourſelves

* Gal. i. 4. † Acts viii. 39. ‡ 1 Theſſ. iv. 18.

openly in its Favour, whenever Opportunity requires or invites, is no more than acting in Character. Vicious and impious Creatures boldly ſhew themſelves in Their Characters. *They corrupt others,* as the Pſalmiſt obſerves, (indeed who can help obſerving it?) *and ſpeak of wicked Blaſphemy: their Talking is againſt the Moſt High. They ſtretch forth their Mouth unto Heaven, and their Tongue goeth through the World. Therefore fall the People unto them,* taking their confident Aſſertions for Marks of ſuperior Knowledge; *and thereout ſuck they no ſmall Advantage* *: Advantage to their Cauſe at leaſt, but often to their perſonal Intereſts alſo; which no Men are more given to purſue, by all Methods, direct or indirect. And what ſhould keep Us, who have an infinitely better Cauſe, and that ſupported too by publick Authority, from avowing it in Oppoſition to them, eſpecially along with thoſe, who will join us in ſupporting it? Bad People cannot have one Motive for their Zeal, which we have for ours, and it is the ſtrongeſt poſſible: that I mean, which the Text mentions

II. That God obſerves, and will reward it. *The Lord hearkened and heard, and a Book of Remembrance was written before him.*

He hears indeed every Thing, and can forget nothing. But the Prophet means, that he

* Pſ. lxxiii. 8, 9, 10.

takes

takes a gracious Notice, of this particularly, amongſt other good Actions of his Servants: and will as certainly recompenſe, in the preſent Life, if it ſuit the other Purpoſes of infinite Wiſdom, but however in the next, their Conſultations and Declarations for the Promotion of his Honour, as if they were all regiſtred in a Book, that lay continually open before him *. The World is apt to pay no Attention, or a very ſhort-lived one, to the uſefulleſt Labours of the beſt Chriſtians. Many are condemned by their Example, and occaſionally too thwarted by their Behaviour: nay, ſome perhaps envy their preſent Comfort of Mind, and Proſpect of future Happineſs. Therefore they ſpeak of them with Severity or Scorn, bear hard upon them, try to ſet others againſt them: while, towards People of known bad Principles and Morals, they are all Indulgence and Charity. Mutual Conference and Counſel amongſt ſerious Perſons will conſiderably help them to ſupport ſuch Treatment. Yet ſtill their Situation would often be a diſconſolate and melancholy one, were their only Reſource in themſelves and this Life. But the Reflexion, that they act under the Eye of God, ſhall be directed and owned by Him; the Right, which they have, of ſaying to their own Hearts, and to each other, what our Saviour ſaid to his Diſciples, whom *he ſent forth as Sheep amongſt Wolves* †, *Fear not, little Flock; for it is your Father's good*

* Pſ. lvi. 8. † Matth. x. 16. Luke x. 3.

Pleaſure to give you the Kingdom * ; this alters the View of Things totally. Unpromiſing as preſent Appearances are, *the Kingdoms of this World ſhall be the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Chriſt* †, both in Profeſſion and Practice, far more fully than any one of them hath been yet: and how great muſt be the Honour and the Joy of having contributed to this bleſſed Change! We indeed ſhall probably never ſee it here: but we ſhall look down upon it with Rapture from above. And while we remain below, how reviving is the Aſſurance, *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs*, cultivate faithful Obedience to him, in your own Breaſts, in as many more as you can: *and all other Things ſhall be added unto you* ‡: ſuch Proportions of every worldly Advantage, as will prove really beneficial. And be they more or leſs, they will be enjoyed with ſingular Satisfaction, as Gifts of his Love. But more eſpecially ſuch may hope to eſcape better than others in Times of general Viſitation and Puniſhment; as himſelf intimates in the Verſe after the Text. *They ſhall be mine, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, in the Day, when I make up my Jewels*; or, as it rather ſhould be tranſlated *they ſhall be Jewels*, or, *a peculiar Treaſure, to me*, preſerved with uncommon Care, *in the Day that I make*, or, *appoint: and I will ſpare them, as a Man ſpareth his own Son, that ſerveth him.*

* Luke xii. 32. † Rev. xi. 15. ‡ Matth. vi. 33. Luke xii. 31.

Perſons

Perſons may indeed, by concealing to which Side they belong, eſcape ſome little Perſecutions, and ſecure ſome little Intereſts; and intitle themſelves to ſome favourable Diſtinctions from the Worthleſs, of which laſt many ſeem extremely ambitious. But while the Diſpoſer of all Things *gives them their Deſire* in theſe Reſpects, *he ſends Leanneſs withal into their Souls* *. Either they pine away with ſecret Conſciouſneſs, that they act a mean Part; and feel their Senſe of Duty grow languid for want of exerting it: or if they decline without perceiving the Decay, their State is the more dangerous and hopeleſs. Acknowledgment of God is as neceſſary to our Acceptance, as Faith in him. For St. *Paul* hath told us, that as *with the Heart Man believeth unto Righteouſneſs*, ſo *with the Mouth Confeſſion is made unto Salvation* †. And St. *John* hath ranked together in future Puniſhment, *the Fearful* with the *Unbelieving* ‡. Nay, our Saviour's own Declaration, which cannot be too often brought to mind, is: *Whoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my Words, in this adulterous and ſinful Generation, of him alſo ſhall the Son of Man be aſhamed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with the holy Angels* ‖.

Our Religion then is not to be diſſembled, but avowed. *He, that is not* openly *with*

* Pſ. cvi. 15. † Rom. x. 10. ‡ Rev. xxi. 8.
‖ Mark viii. 38.

Chriſt,

Chriſt, is againſt him *; diſobeys his Directions, and fruſtrates, as far as he can, a valuable Part of his Deſign. But they, who aſſiſt his Followers to ſupport his Cauſe, though wicked or thoughtleſs *Men revile them* for it, are expreſsly aſſured, that *great is their Reward in Heaven* †: always provided, that the reſt of their Character and Conduct be ſuitable to this Part. For Scripture Promiſes, made to one Duty, muſt ever be underſtood on Suppoſition of its being performed from ſuch Principles, as will effectually influence us to obſerve every Duty. And then, the more we abound in this particularly, the ampler will be our Recompence.

Now therefore I proceed,

III. To apply what hath been ſaid, to the preſent Occaſion.

Beneficial as pious Diſcourſe and Conſultation is in general, the Benefit may both be increaſed to ourſelves and other ſerious Believers, and extended further amongſt the Vicious and Inconſiderate, by our uniting into regular Societies for the more conſtant Intercourſe of mutual Edification, and Support of religious Behaviour. In theſe, the Knot of virtuous Friendſhip is drawn cloſer; each Member of them is by the reſt warmed into greater Earneſtneſs, furniſhed with fuller Advice, bound

* Matth. xii. 30. Luke xi. 23. † Matth. v. 11, 12. Luke vi. 22, 23.

to

to ſtricter Circumſpection. They are Shelters and Protections, to which the Weak may fly: they are *Cities*, though ſmall, *ſet on a Hill*, to attract the Obſervation and direct the Steps of Travellers: they are *Lights* ſhining in *the World*, to ſhew Men the Path of Life*. Such indeed principally are the more publick *Aſſemblies* of Chriſtians: which true Chriſtians will on no Account ever *forſake*; though it be *the Manner of ſome* †, indeed of many in our Days, who yet retain the Name, to ſlight them, in direct Oppoſition both to Scripture and Reaſon. But going to Church at the appointed Times hath been repreſented as a thing, which People do thoughtleſsly and of courſe, or to avoid Cenſure: whereas voluntary Societies, like yours, cannot be under that Imputation. Joining in Them proceeds plainly from deliberate Choice; and proclaims very ſeaſonably in a degenerate Age, a Senſe of Duty, which may through God's Bleſſing have excellent Effects. Indeed, were this Method recommended no other Way, the Practice of our Adverſaries might teach it us. Unbelievers have their infidel Clubs: nay, turn into ſuch, as far as they can, every Sort of Meeting for every other Purpoſe. Thus they ſtrengthen each others Hands in Impiety: and ſurely then we ſhould aſſociate to *build up* each other *in our holy Faith* ‡. Not that you are to condemn thoſe, who do not in Form become Members of your Societies. They may have

* Matth. v. 14. † Heb. x. 25. ‡ Jude Ver. 20.

Reaſons, with which you are unacquainted: they may do what is equivalent in ſome other Way; they may judge ill in this Particular, and yet mean and act well in the main. But ſtill joining more viſibly and profeſſedly in the Work of the Lord, as you do, may be of ſingular Service to yourſelves and others.

Nor can it be doubted, but theſe Societies, in the many Years which they have ſubſiſted, have preſerved and reclaimed from Sin, improved and ripened in Goodneſs, great Multitudes of Souls: a Praiſe infinitely ſuperior to all that any other Combinations can claim, which are inſtituted for worldly Pleaſure or Profit; and, without much Caution, may divert the Attention to wrong Matters, or fix it on ſuch as are comparatively Trifles; whereas yours points it directly to the *one Thing needful* *. Long Practice and Trial hath taught you, what Regulations are moſt proper to avoid Inconveniences; and attain the excellent Ends, which you propoſe. Indeed the printed Orders of one of your Aſſemblies, which I take it for granted the reſt have in Subſtance, are ſo perfectly right and wiſe, that you need but little more Direction, than often to read them carefully over, and keep up to the Spirit of them.

Merely paying a perſonal Attendance at your Societies, and joining with it a decent

* Luke x. 42.

Deport-

Deportment in common Life, though it may be an Example of ſome ſpiritual Uſe to others, will be of little more than worldly Benefit to yourſelves: indeed will deceive you fatally, if you reſt in it. For a bare outſide Profeſſion is nothing, is Hypocriſy. Nay, though you practiſe from an inward Principle of Conſcience ever ſo many human Virtues, but without Regard to God, you are only moral, not pious Men. Nay further, if you alſo worſhip and honour Him, and think that by this you merit Favour and Reward from him, you are miſerably ignorant of his Holineſs, and your own ſinful Imperfections. Or even ſhould you go yet another Step, and truſt, not in your good Works, but in his Mercy, as diſcoverable by the Light of Reaſon only: that can never ſhew you certainly, whether, and in what Degree, his Mercy will extend to you; and though *not far from the Kingdom of God**, you ſtill want one Thing before you can enter into it, Faith in this Mercy, as purchaſed by the Blood, and offered by the Goſpel, of Jeſus Chriſt. Numbers, alas, in our Days have wholly, or in part, ſlighted and caſt off his Goſpel. But inſtead of following Them, remember the Saying of St. *Peter*, when *many of his Diſciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then ſaid Jeſus unto the Twelve, will ye alſo go away? Then Simon Peter anſwered him; Lord, to whom ſhall we go? Thou haſt the Words of eternal Life* †. If you once

* Mark xii. 34. † John vi. 66, 67, 68.

leave

leave the revealed Will of God; what you are to do, will often be Matter of Doubt: but how you ſhall be able to do it, and what you are to hope or to fear, after doing ſo little rightly, and ſo much amiſs, will be always uncertain. And in theſe Circumſtances, worldly Intereſt, or Senſuality, or Vanity will ſoon tempt you, as too frequent Experience hath proved, firſt to live wickedly, then to diſbelieve a future Recompence. Therefore if you love your Souls, if indeed you would preſerve any Senſe of Religion at all, ſtand faſt in the Faith of your bleſſed Redeemer. Very poſſibly you may hear not only Jeſts thrown upon it, which deſerve nothing more than Contempt and Abhorrence, but ſeeming or real Difficulties raiſed in Relation to it, and ſhrewd Objections urged againſt ſuch a Doctrine, or ſuch a Text, or ſuch a Fact. Qualify yourſelves to anſwer them, if you can: for Anſwers to them all there are. But if you cannot; rely ſecurely, as you well may, on the accumulated Evidence of innumerable Miracles performed and Prophecies fulfilled, the Sublimity and Purity of the Doctrine, the incomparable Excellence of the Character of Chriſt, the diſintereſted Sufferings of his firſt Followers, the glorious Prevalence of his Goſpel againſt all Oppoſition, the divine Efficacy of it on the Hearts of Men. Theſe are general, obvious, irrefragable Proofs of the whole of Chriſtianity at once: ſufficient to outweigh ten thouſand Exceptions to particular Parts.

Being

Being convinced then, that you ought to receive the Gospel of Christ, receive it in Simplicity, *as the Truth is in Jesus* *. Believe in him, as *God manifest in the Flesh* †, believe in the Atonement of his Death, the Necessity of the Grace of his Spirit, the Efficacy of his Institutions: and that with such a Faith, as will equally prompt you to pray for Pardon and Help, and to *cleanse yourselves*, by Means of the Assistance granted you, *from all Filthiness of the Flesh and Spirit, perfecting Holiness in the Fear of God* ‡.

From this Faith will arise comfortable Hope, which differs only in Degree from joyful Assurance, of being in a State of Acceptance and Salvation. But the Scripture hath not taught us, nor is it safe, to judge of our spiritual Condition by any such delightful Feeling, instantaneously impressed upon us: for the presumptuous Sinner may work himself into the Imagination of it, and the modest and humble Saint experience it much less strongly. But the Rule is, to *know* ourselves, as well as others, *by our Fruits* ‖. If our *Faith work by Love* §, Love of God, Love of our Neighbour, Love of Goodness and of Heaven, all is well. In these therefore exercise yourselves *to make your Calling and Election sure*, and your Societies respectable: *for if ye do these Things, ye shall never fall* **.

* Eph. iv. 21. † 1 Tim. iii. 16. ‡ 2 Cor. vii. 1.
‖ Matth. vii. 16, &c. § Gal. v. 6. ** 2 Pet. i. 10.

Each

Each of you then be careful ſeparately to *adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all Things* *. *Abſtain*, not only *from* all Evil, but *all Appearance of Evil* †, leſt *the Name of God be blaſphemed through you among the Gentiles* ‡. *Be not conformed to this World* ‖ in any Thing ſinful, enſnaring, ſuſpicious; for ſuch many of the Cuſtoms of this World are. Avoid unbecoming Levities in Diſcourſe; Indulgence to the full, or Delicacy, in Meats and Drinks; vain Shew and Expence in Apparel, Amuſements of bad Report or bad Example: form your Families, as well as yourſelves, to *ſeek and ſet their Affections, not on Things on the Earth, but Things above, where Chriſt ſitteth on the right Hand of God* §. Yet at the ſame Time recommend your Serioufneſs by as eaſy and cheerful a Deportment as you can; be *gentle* **, *be courteous* ††, excuſe yourſelves with Civility from what you cannot approve; cenſure no Liberties, that are innocent; and with Moderation join gracefully, if poſſible, in all harmleſs Things, to which Propriety invites you. In your Dealings and Buſineſs, be juſt, ſincere, equitable, compaſſionate: for it is a dreadful Prejudice againſt the Goſpel, when they, who diſtinguiſh themſelves in the Profeſſion of it, are thought unfair, indirect, unreaſonable, hard-hearted. Be alſo diligent in your Vocations,

* Tit. ii. 10. † 1 Theſſ. v. 22. ‡ Rom. ii. 24.
‖ Rom. xii. 2. § Col. iii. 1, 2. ** Tit. iii. 2.
†† 1 Pet. iii. 8.

frugal,

frugal, prudent: for theſe alſo are Chriſtian Duties: and if, for want of obſerving them, you fail to thrive tolerably well in the World, all will be imputed to your Expence of Time, and Thought, and Money, on your religious Meetings and Schemes. Beſides, you ought both to *labour* and be ſaving, *that you may have to give to him that needeth* *. Infidels are apt to boaſt of their Charity and Good-nature: and it concerns us highly not to let them be ſuperior to us in any Branch of our Saviour's *new Commandment*, univerſal *Love* †: but exerciſe even towards Them, who ſeldom fail to treat Us and our holy Faith deſpitefully and contemptuouſly, as far as they can, all the Humanity, Candour and Friendlineſs, that is conſiſtent with being *undefiled and ſeparate from Sinners* ‡. Much more be mild towards profeſſed Chriſtians, who ſeem either on the one Hand too rigid, or on the other defective, in Faith or Practice. Guard yourſelves againſt both Extremes: warn Them, if properly called to it: but otherwiſe leave them *to their own Maſter, to ſtand or fall* ‖. Even ſhould any of them be ſo ill-informed or ill-tempered, as to think or ſpeak ſlightly or harſhly of you perſonally, or of your Societies; *inſtruct them in Meekneſs* §, if there be Hope of ſetting them right: if not, bear with them in Silence, and be content with the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience.

* Eph. iv. 28. † John xiii. 34. ‡ Heb. vii. 26.
‖ Rom. xiv. 4. § 2 Tim. ii. 25.

In Proportion as each of you ſingly obſerves, or tranſgreſſes, theſe Goſpel Rules, he will bring Honour or Shame on himſelf; on the particular Body, to which he belongs; on theſe Aſſemblies in general. And their influencing their Members effectually to eminent Goodneſs, is the beſt, indeed the only ſtrong Argument, that you can uſe to invite others into them. Therefore take eſpecial Care, that you may always be able to uſe that with Truth. For this End, beware in the firſt Place of letting your Conferences degenerate into *Form without Power* *, into Lukewarmneſs and Supineneſs, *a Name that you live*, while indeed you *are dead* †: and if there have been any Tendency this Way, *remember from whence you are fallen* ‡, *be zealous and repent* ‖, and pray God to *revive his Work in the Midſt of the Years* §. Beware in the next Place of running into Controverſies and Diſputes. You have wiſely guarded againſt theſe, by admitting ſuch Perſons only as are well affected to our preſent happy Eſtabliſhment in Church and State. Guard againſt them ſtill further, by avoiding to debate any unneceſſary Points of any Kind. Never indeed ſlight what God hath plainly taught, but never inſiſt on what he hath not: about all needleſs Queſtions, allow different Opinions amongſt yourſelves, without talking of them; neither cenſure thoſe of others, nor preſs your own. In

* 2 Tim. iii. 5. † Rev. iii. 1. ‡ Rev. ii. 5.
‖ Rev. iii. 19. § Hab. iii. 2.

Matters

Matters of practical Religion indeed, you not only may, but ought to be earneſt. Yet even there, deſpiſe not good Perſons of leſs fervent Diſpoſitions; and heat not one another, or yourſelves, into unmeaning or injudicious Tranſports; but let your Piety be at once an affectionate and *a reaſonable Service* *. Be mutually helpful, if you properly can, even in temporal Affairs. For the Apoſtle hath directed us to do *good eſpecially unto them, that are of the Houſhold of Faith* †: and therefore ſurely to thoſe, whom we have the beſt Ground to think worthy Members of that Houſhold. But your principal Concern, beyond all Compariſon, is to promote your common Good in Spirituals: to *comfort yourſelves together, and edify one another, even as ye do* ‡: *if a Man be overtaken in a Fault, to reſtore ſuch a one in the Spirit of Meekneſs*, each *conſidering himſelf, leſt he alſo be tempted* ‖: to *ſuffer the Word of Exhortation* §, and even of Rebuke, with Patience, according to that of the Pſalmiſt, *Let the Righteous ſmite me friendly and reprove me* **, and of *Solomon, He that rebuketh a Man, ſhall afterwards find more Favour, than he that flattereth with the Tongue* ††. Nay, ſhould any one by his Behaviour oblige you to *have no* longer *Company with him, that he may be aſhamed*; yet the Precepts of Chriſtian Charity bind you, *not to count him an Enemy*, but

* Rom. xii. 1. † Gal. vi. 10. ‡ 1 Theſſ. v. 11.
‖ Gal. vi. 1. § Heb. xiii. 22. ** Pſ. cxli. 5.
†† Prov. xxviii. 23.

ſtill, ſo far as there is any Room left, *admoniſh him as a Brother* *. But, Brethren, though I ſpeak thus *boldly to you, as putting you in mind*, yet I *am perſuaded of you, that ye are full of Goodneſs, and all Knowledge, able to admoniſh one another* †, without foreign Aſſiſtance. And therefore I add only my hearty Prayers, *that your Love may abound yet more and more in Knowledge and all Judgment: that ye may approve Things that are excellent, that ye may be ſincere and without Offence till the Day of Chriſt, being filled with the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt unto the Glory and Praiſe of God* ‡.

* 2 Theſſ. iii. 14, 15. † Rom. xv. 14, 15. ‡ Phil. i. 9, 10, 11.

SER-

SERMON XII.

Preached before the Society corresponding with the *Incorporated Society in Dublin*, for promoting *Engliſh* Proteſtant Working-Schools in *Ireland*, at their General Meeting in the Pariſh-Church of St. *Mary le Bow*, on *Wedneſday*, *April* 27, 1757.

PROV. ix. 6.

Forſake the Fooliſh, and live: and go in the Way of Underſtanding.

THESE are the Words of Wiſdom herſelf, ſpeaking in Perſon: and to ſpeak them with Effect to the Poor of our neighbouring Iſland, that *forſaking the Follies* of their Anceſtors, they may *live* as Men ought; *and go in the Way of Underſtanding*, through the Practice of the Duties, and Enjoyment of the Comforts of this World, to the Happineſs of the next, is the whole Intent of the Charity, which we are met to promote: the nobleſt and greateſt of the Kind, that ever exiſted,

The Kingdom of *Ireland* is bleſſed by Providence with all the Means of Proſperity: and yet the Bulk of the People are in a Condition very lamentable. With Health and Strength, they have little or no Induſtry: with Capacities like other Men, they have little or no Knowledge, even of the common Arts of Life. With the beſt Situation and Opportunities for Commerce, they have ſcarce any of the Conveniencies which it imports: with a fertile Soil, in a temperate Climate, they have ſcarce Food and Raiment. Under a Government, which lays on them the feweſt Burthens, that perhaps ever Nation felt, they are inceſſantly wiſhing for a Change: and, which is the Source of all, though the Light of the Reformation ſhines round them, and the Door of Chriſtian Freedom is open to them, they continue in thick Darkneſs, voluntary Slaves to abſurd Superſtitions. Attached with ſervile Awe to the loweſt Emiſſaries of the See of *Rome*, they imbibe even the Dregs of its Errors: which many, in other Countries of the ſame Communion, have the Wiſdom to reject. Hence their Idolatry is groſſer, their Eſteem of ſocial Duties leſs, their Dependence on outward Formalities more confident, their Enmity to Proteſtants bitterer: and their Abhorrence of Labour almoſt inſuperable, becauſe it will benefit thoſe, whom they deteſt.

We ought to pity all the Miſtakes and Sufferings of all our Fellow-creatures, and yet more

more of our Fellow-Chriſtians, how much ſoever they proceed from their own Faults. Even their temporal Evils ought to move us very ſenſibly: and though Penury and Nakedneſs may appear to unaccuſtomed Eyes more grievous than they are; yet the real Diſtreſſes flowing from them are often extremely heavy. But their ſpiritual Diſadvantages, that they have ſo little Acquaintance with rational Piety, univerſal Benevolence, the Value of moral Self-Government, and the genuine Syſtem of *the Truth as it is in Jeſus* *, theſe intitle them to much tenderer Compaſſion, though ſeldom conſidered in that View. For our Fellow-Subjects we ought to feel an additional Concern, were their Intereſts ever ſo ſeparable from our own: but in the preſent Caſe they are united moſt intimately. While theſe unhappy Creatures remain without proper Employment, the Country in general muſt be unhealthy, as well as unpleaſant, for want of Culture; and thinly peopled, for want of Neceſſaries: the Sight of ſo much Wretchedneſs muſt be painful; the Relief of it expenſive, and nevertheleſs unavailing. That Part of the *Britiſh* Dominions muſt be deſtitute of the Wealth and Strength, which Diligence would quickly procure it: and inſtead of contributing to the Support of the Whole, muſt drain and exhauſt *England* for its Defence, whenever attacked.

* Epheſ. iv. 21.

This would be unavoidable, were the Natives ever ſo amicably diſpoſed towards us, ever ſo dutifully towards our Sovereign. But being of a different and perſecuting Religion; taught by bigotted Parents and Inſtructors to regard us as Hereticks, abhorred of God; and devoted, by his Vicegerent on Earth, to preſent, as well as future, Deſtruction: ſome of them will think doing Miſchief to us, when they can without Hazard, a laudable Action; and others will imagine Fraud, or Perjury, or Violence againſt ſuch abominable Miſcreants, Offences that claim an eaſy Abſolution. Theſe Sentiments muſt greatly affect their Conduct in the ordinary Intercourſes of Life: but unſpeakably more, when the Intereſts of their Church come in Queſtion. Accordingly, for theſe, in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, they were rebelling perpetually: in that of King *Charles* I. they maſſacred, unprovoked, as many compute, above *One Hundred Thouſand* Perſons of our Faith: in that of King *James* II. and the War that followed, not only the meaner Sort, but the upper alſo, gave ſhocking Proofs of the like inhuman Spirit. By ſuch repeated Enormities, Multitudes of them, on various Occaſions, forfeited their Eſtates with their Lives. Theſe Forfeitures, their Deſcendants, whilſt they cheriſh the ſame Way of thinking, muſt conſider as Nullities; and wiſh and hope to regain what they have loſt: pining with Envy, thirſting for Revenge; and imputing their Poverty, the Fruit originally

nally of their Treaſons, and ſince of their Idleneſs, and Maintenance of Prieſts without End, to our inſupportable Oppreſſions.

Thus uneaſy at Home, vaſt Numbers of them go Abroad, and chiefly into the Territories of our Enemies or Rivals. There ſome of them exert themſelves in Trade to our Detriment, which they would not do in their own Land for our common Benefit. Some again, who have got Riches already, carry them away to enjoy them elſewhere. But far the greateſt Part of theſe Emigrants take up the Profeſſion of Arms in the Service of Popiſh Powers; attack us with peculiar Fierceneſs in the Day of Battle, as we have felt to our Coſt; and are always ready, when a critical Juncture ſhall appear, to return and head their Countrymen againſt us in another meritorious holy War: which we have the more Cauſe to apprehend, as their Biſhops are nominated by the Pretender; as neither Clergy nor Laity amongſt them have ever given, or offered to give, though preſſed to it by ſome of their own Church, any Pledge of their Fidelity to the preſent Government; and as thoſe Regions of the Iſland, which they occupy the moſt entirely, are the neareſt to the Continent *.

We

* We have been told indeed by a late Apologiſt for them (*b*), that they have, for near 70 Years paſt, that is, ever ſince they could not help themſelves, been perfectly well affected. But we

(*b*) The Caſe of the Roman Catholicks of *Ireland*, *Dublin*, 1755.

We must be allowed therefore to recollect what hath been; and conclude from thence, what

we can by no means trust, against all Probability, and the Experience of successive Ages, to the bare Word of a nameless Author. And much less can we do it, when a contemporary Author, an Officer of his own Nation and Belief, living amongst our Enemies, where he may speak out with Safety and Applause, treats our happy Establishment as an Usurpation: and frankly declares, that the *Irish* Papists have a settled Antipathy to *Englishmen*, with a strong Attachment to *France*, and the House of *Stuart* (*c*).

We have also been told by the same Apologist and others, that whatever the Court of *Rome* may have done, the Church of *Rome* hath never patronised Persecution, or Rebellion, or Breach of Oaths or Promises, to introduce or support its Doctrine or Discipline. But if We must be in Danger of these Things, whenever the Court of *Rome*, or its Partisans have Power; it is but a sorry Consolation to tell us, that the Church of *Rome* hath no Hand in them. And yet whence are we to learn the Tenets of that Church? Not surely from a few obscure, or at best private Writers: but from the Decrees of her Councils, general and particular, the uniform Determinations of her Popes, the Edicts of her Princes (*d*), the received Opinions of her Divines; the constant Practice of her Members, whenever an inviting Opportunity presents itself; and that Practice not once condemned as unlawful, by any pretended Authority amongst them; though there have been many and loud Calls upon them to condemn it, if indeed they disapprove it. But they have better Ways than this: they force the most notorious Facts alledged against them, into a Neutrality, if not into their Service, by Misrepresentations: or, if any be intractably stubborn, they pass it over in total Silence. Thus particularly this Apologist, though he relates a Variety of Historical Occurrences, to shew that his Catholick Friends were innocent, or excusable in them all, no more mentions or hints at the horrid Butchery of 1641, than if he had never heard of any such Thing. And the *Irish* Officer, poor Man, hath forgotten it as entirely, in his Narration of Matters, relative to the Papists of that Island: though he remembers a great deal more, than is true, of what preceded,

(*c*) Lettres d'un Officier Irlandois à un Officier François de ses Amis, Mem. de Trev. Aout, Sept. 1756.

(*d*) See a Discourse concerning the Laws, Ecclesiastical and Civil, made against Heretick. *London*, printed for *John Wyatt*, 1723.

what will, or may be: to put ourſelves, when it is requiſite, in the Condition of our Forefathers; adopt their Feelings, to excite our Vigilance, though not our Reſentment; and make ſupplemental Proviſions for Security, where the former have proved inſufficient.

How they came to be inſufficient, needs not be minutely examined here. *Ireland*, remote from the reſt of *Europe*, and haraſſed continually by domeſtick Feuds, was in a State of great Ignorance and Rudeneſs at the Reformation. God, *whoſe Judgments are unſearchable* *, raiſed up then in that Country none of the *burning and ſhining Lights* †, which he did elſewhere. Popery therefore, while the Attention of *England* was engaged at Home, kept its Ground, and ſoon fortified it by foreign Schools and Connexions. The firſt Rebellions indeed, which followed on this, principally weakened the Authors of them: but the dreadful Maſſacre almoſt extinguiſhed the Proteſtants. And though the Perpetrators of it ſuffered in their Turns very ſeverely: yet the Survivors were buoyed up with Hopes, in the two next Reigns, of recovering all: which they were on the Point of accompliſhing, when the Arrival of our Deliverer King *William*, and their unſucceſsful Oppoſition to him,

preceded, and followed it. Treating Perſons in this Manner, is really holding their Underſtandings in too much Contempt: and being almoſt as void of Judgment, as of Honeſty and Shame.

* Rom. xi. 33. † John v. 35.

broke

broke their Strength, but not their Obſtinacy. However, ſince that Time, the Perſons of Figure have been gradually coming over: ſome on right Motives; others in Conſequence of ſuch Regulations, as the Legiſlature can juſtly make in its own Defence, and Papiſts can never conſiſtently blame, though wrong Minds may be tempted by them to Hypocriſy. Still, Proſelytes on ſuſpected Inducements, and ſome of them only from the Profeſſion of a falſe Religion to the Profeſſion of none, are not likely to have much Influence, were they to endeavour it, on their Inferiors: who accordingly have adhered to the *Romiſh* Communion.

And were they never to quit it, their Prieſts unqueſtionably, had they Uprightneſs and Prudence enough, might give them both better Diſpoſitions to Induſtry, and juſter Notions of Chriſtianity. But there is no Proſpect that they ever will, in any great Meaſure: or ſhould they do their beſt, the moſt refined Popery is a dangerous Corruption of the Goſpel; and hath beſides a large Mixture of Things hurtful to Civil Society. But eſpecially where a Perſon of the ſame Perſuaſion keeps up a Claim to the Crown, its Votaries will never be further good Subjects, than as their ſeeming ſuch may procure Connivance at their making Converts, to which they confeſs themſelves indiſpenſably bound: and ſhould they ever make enow, there would be no Peace afterwards,

terwards, unleſs we and our King became what they would have us.

Therefore, till the Generality of the *Iriſh* are brought to be Proteſtants, the *Engliſh* are not ſafe. And doubtleſs they might have been brought to it, by Gallies and Inquiſitions, long ago. *But we have not ſo learned Chriſt* *. Our Adverſaries can uſe every Degree of Force: yet proteſt, on Occaſion, indeed at the very Time and Place, if it be needful, that they uſe none; and inveigh againſt us for ſanguinary Laws, which they have extorted from us by diſloyal Practices, and which they know all their Invectives cannot provoke us to execute. But *the Weapons of our Warfare are not carnal* †, but ſpiritual: Inſtruction, Conviction, Exhortation. Now unhappily the Perſons, whoſe peculiar Office it is to diſpenſe theſe, are, in all *Ireland*, ſcarce *Eight Hundred:* a Number vaſtly inferior, not only to that of the Popiſh Prieſts, but to the Neceſſities even of the preſent Proteſtants. Beſides, of theſe few, a large Proportion have no Places of Abode in or near their Pariſhes. This alone would be a ſad Diſcouragement: but a ſtill worſe is, that where Ignorance hath long obtained almoſt univerſal Poſſeſſion, and People are unuſed to reaſon, perſuading them out of ſettled Habits of religious Belief and Practice hath Difficulties hardly ſurmountable; and yet leſs when the Application is made to

* Eph. iv. 29. † 2 Cor. x. 4.

them

them by Perſons, whom they diſlike; but leaſt of all, when hearkening to it for a Moment is prohibited under Penalty of Anathemas, at which they tremble. Attempts have been made: their Language hath been learned on Purpoſe: and none would or durſt give the Preacher a Hearing. Poſſibly ſome Clergymen may have been too much diſheartened by ſuch Inſtances. Poſſibly others, God forgive them, may have been glad to excuſe themſelves from taking diſagreeable Pains. And the Heads of our Church have not an abſolute Power over their Inferiors, to ſend them on what Miſſions they pleaſe, as thoſe of the Church of *Rome* have. How far they have exerted the little, that is left them, I cannot ſay. But, before either Biſhops or Parochial Miniſters are vehemently blamed, let the Laity reflect, whether They alſo may not have been negligent in relation to many of theſe poor Creatures, who live under their Roofs; and try, what Impreſſion they can make on them. If they ſucceed, I hope it will beget Emulation: if not, they will be readier to pardon Want of Succeſs, or even Deſpair, in others: and conclude, that no Method will effectually teach them our Religion, but Education in it.

Were Children taught nothing early, they would know nothing, and be fit for nothing, as long as they lived. But ſome Principles of Behaviour they will learn: and therefore ſhould learn

learn the beſt, which are thoſe of true Piety. Their Inſtructors may direct them wrong in that Reſpect, as well as in others: but ſtill they muſt give them ſuch Advice for both Worlds, as they think is beneficial; no leſs than ſuch Food, as they think is wholeſome. And if one Leſſon be, what is conſtantly one of ours, *to prove every Thing*, as they become able, *to hold faſt that which is Good, and abſtain from all Appearance of Evil**: this is a potent Corrective of whatever Miſtakes may chance to be infuſed into them. Without this Corrective, nay, prohibiting it as Poiſon, the *Romaniſts* employ the whole Influence of Education to the utmoſt: and therefore cannot reproach Us, who employ it with ſuch a Reſtriction. Nor ſurely can the bittereſt Enemies to inſtilling of Prejudices doubt, which Sort are better. They may wiſh perhaps, that Children ſhould have no Faith, but a Scorn of it: and they may bring up their own Children thus, and take the Conſequences. But Mankind in general muſt and will have a Religion: and Multitudes are turned or kept Papiſts, by ſeeing, that ſo many pretended Proteſtants have none. Or ſuppoſing the Project feaſible in itſelf, and otherwiſe unpuniſhed by Providence: yet Morals in private Life, and Order in publick, cannot but decay and be loſt, along with the Fear of God.

* 1 Theſſ. v. 21, 22.

Still,

Still, to educate Children in our own Perſuaſion, againſt the Will of Fathers or Mothers, would be cruel, though legal; unleſs, by ſome overt Act, they loſe, or give up, their Claim to educate them; whatever Title the State may have to ſee, that they are bred loyal and uſeful Subjects. And therefore our Society takes none away by Authority, but thoſe of vagrant Beggars. Yet our Adverſaries, I conceive, would few, if any of them, be ſo ſcrupulous as to make that Diſtinction. And certainly not one of them would queſtion, but young Perſons, committed to their Care, might and ought to be inſtructed in their Creed. Nor, I preſume, would they inquire very ſtrictly, what induced the Parent to delegate to them his Right. We induce him, neither by hard Uſage, nor Menaces, nor Rewards, nor Promiſes: but only propoſe to him the Benefit of his Child. And Nature enjoins him to promote even its worldly Benefit in every lawful Manner. His Prieſts indeed may tell him, this Manner is unlawful. But that, and many other Aſſertions of theirs, of which ſome appear at firſt Sight very ſtrange ones, are flatly contradicted by Numbers of Perſons, as wiſe, as learned, ſeemingly as ſolicitous too about their own eternal Happineſs. He hath no ſolid Grounds to prefer the Opinion of the former to that of the latter. And therefore in this Uncertainty, though he may reſolve for himſelf not to change Sides, break his old Connexions, and make his old Friends uneaſy: yet

yet why ſhould he not intruſt a Son or a Daughter with thoſe, who will both provide better for their temporal Intereſts, and qualify them to judge better about their religious ones, than He can?

Whatever their Reaſonings may be, the Fact is, that Popiſh Parents are willing to ſend their Children to the newly erected Charter-Schools: and more are likely to become willing. The Reproach of it muſt wear off with the Novelty: the Stories of their bad Treatment there have been diſproved, as faſt as they have been raiſed: and, I believe, the Prieſts have often found it their Wiſdom not to overſtretch their Authority in this Caſe, for Fear of weakening it in all. But granting, that theſe Houſes cannot be always quite filled with the Offspring of Papiſts, which however make in all of them vaſtly the Majority; yet the Admiſſion of Orphans or Vagrants, who elſe would fall into the Hands of Papiſts, hath the ſame good Effect. And were now and then a few, whoſe Parents are known Proteſtants, to be received: no one, who approves either our common Charity-Schools, or that great Charity-School, the Foundling-Hoſpital, could fail to be pleaſed even with this Branch of the Management; eſpecially conſidering, how well the whole is conducted.

The particular Rules cannot be ſpecified here: but one there is, of great Extent and

Importance; which would God were obſerved in this Nation; combining Inſtruction with Labour. The firſt Part of Inſtruction, to ſuch as need it, is teaching them *Engliſh:* for till they underſtand that competently, their only Inlet of Knowledge is from the Prieſts and their Followers. They learn alſo ſomewhat of Writing and Arithmetick, which are of Uſe in the loweſt Occupations: and more of Reading; for the good Books, which are put into their Hands, when they go away, may contribute greatly to fix them in true Religion. Of this, the plain Doctrines and practical Precepts are taught them, with neceſſary Preſervatives againſt Popiſh Errors: a Proceeding no leſs prudent, than conſcientious. For were they inſtructed in gainful Arts, but the Notions of their Fathers left to grow up in them, it might cauſe in Time a dangerous Acceſſion to the Property of that Intereſt. And were thoſe Notions to be rooted out, and no better planted; Labour without Religion, will generally, as ſoon as ever it enriches, if not before, give place to Idleneſs, Diſſoluteneſs, and all Sorts of Crimes: whereas Diligence from a Principle of Piety will go on, providing for Deſcendants, for Relations, for the Poor; and teaching them all to provide, in their Turns, for ſuch as belong to them.

But the Book-Learning of theſe Children takes up only two Hours of their Day: the reſt they ſpend in Work. And ſo much of the

the Boys Work, as can, is Agriculture, for their Nouriſhment and Clothing: together with ſome Rudiments of Planting and Gardening. Thus every School is a little Farm: and helps to raiſe Emulation in the moſt neceſſary of all Buſineſs, of which the Example and the Skill is peculiarly wanting in *Ireland*. Beſides this, both Sexes learn thoſe Kinds of Manufacture, eſpecially the Linnen, for which there is like to be a Demand: and ſuch Qualifications, as are requiſite for common Servants; Proteſtant Servants being, on many Accounts, highly valuable. The Earnings of the Scholars, by the Things which they make or do for others, are, in moſt Foundations, given to the Maſter or Miſtreſs, as Part of their Salary: an admirable Way of ſecuring the Children's Induſtry.

If ſtill it be imagined, that they might do more: Inquiry and Obſervation will gradually ſuggeſt every where the Means to that End. But they are put out, as ſoon as their Labour is worth having: for the Deſign is not to get Money for the Schools by them; but to ſupply that Nation with the quickeſt Succeſſion poſſible of Proteſtant Workmen. If, notwithſtanding, the Expence of the Charity be thought immoderate; it ſhould be recollected, that the mere Building and fitting up ſo many new Fabricks, muſt be a heavy Burthen, which will ceaſe in Time. And two or three have been more ſumptuous, than needed; but at

the Charge of the Perſons, who deſired it, not of the Society: and Care hath been taken of late to obviate all Pretence for that Complaint. Another Conſideration is, that the Children muſt be removed to a Diſtance from their Parents, and their Prieſts: elſe the latter, at leaſt, would be perpetually tampering with them: and this Precaution coſts a great deal. They muſt alſo be entirely maintained: elſe they would not be ſent. But the Food and Cloathing of each, over and above the Produce of their Labour, is only about Fifty Shillings a Year; ſurely a ſmall Charge for ſo excellent a Purpoſe: beſides that the whole Money, laid out, circulates in the Neighbourhood.

When their Schooling is completed, they are all apprenticed: and, which ſhews in what Eſteem they are held, nothing hath been given with them for ſeveral Years paſt. As many go out to Huſbandry, as Perſons will employ that Way: more cannot. None, for ſome Time, have been put to Sea: partly becauſe it ſeems better at preſent, that they ſhould people their own Country with well-diſpoſed Inhabitants, than be conſumed in Voyages; and partly alſo, becauſe a falſe Rumour, induſtriouſly propagated, of their being tranſported, for Slaves, to remote Regions, hath raiſed ſo wild a Suſpicion, that they, who are tranſplanted from one Part of the Iſland to another, muſt all be conveyed by Land,

Land, to diſprove it. They are placed only in Proteſtant Families: and when they leave them, have a Bounty of Five Pounds from the Society, on their marrying Proteſtants: it being generally found, that when either Party, eſpecially the Wife, is a Papiſt, the other is perverted by the Help of the Prieſt; or however, the Children are educated in that Perſuaſion. I wiſh the Laity, Men and Women, of our Communion, were equally aſſiduous, and equally aſſiſted by their Miniſters.

It hath been affirmed, that after all the Care, ſaid to be taken, moſt of theſe Children relapſe. And at firſt many did: who yet muſt not only have been made uſefuller in Civil Society by what they learnt, but, one ſhould think, muſt alſo feel ſome Gratitude for the Improvements, which they had received; and diſlike our Religion the leſs, the more they knew of it. But however that might be, I am aſſured, on particular Inquiry, that now, ſince the Method of tranſplanting hath been followed, extremely few have become Apoſtates. Indeed why ſhould not Habit alone operate as powerfully in our Favour, as againſt us? And why ſhould not young People, thus grounded, ſee the Reaſonableneſs, and feel the Amiableneſs of Proteſtantiſm, eſpecially when compared with groſs *Iriſh* Popery, ſo ſtrongly, as to be more likely, when grown up, to bring over others, than be

brought over by them? Why, in particular, may not their affectionate Remonſtrances and Behaviour, aſſiſted by the tender Workings of Nature in their Behalf, prevail, ſooner or later, on their ignorant Parents, to *forſake the Fooliſh, and live, and go in the Way of Underſtanding?*

Still it hath been ſaid by ſome, that at beſt the Progreſs of the Deſign is too ſlow, to produce any material Alteration. And we own, that for ſome Time it was almoſt imperceptible. Several Years muſt paſs, before a ſingle Child could be ſent from the Schools: and ſeveral more, before one could act for himſelf. Nay, ſince that, we have not advanced ſo faſt, as might be wiſhed: no good Deſign ever doth. Nor indeed is over great Haſte adviſable. A new Eſtabliſhment cannot prudently be made any where, till Propoſals, reaſonably advantageous, are offered; and a Committee fixed, of truſty and active Perſons, in the Neighbourhood, to ſuperintend it: which, in the midſt of Papiſts, where it is moſt needed, is hardeſt to be found. However, it is no inconſiderable Thing, after all, in ſo ſhort a Space to have had One thouſand five hundred Children put Apprentices, and above One thouſand ſix hundred more now actually inſtructing. Were only the ſame Number to be kept up, it would augment, without ceaſing, the Inclination of the Balance to our Side: and at length the Scale

muſt

muſt turn. But every Year hath brought an Increaſe: and, we may juſtly hope, will bring a greater. The good Conſequences of the Undertaking will be more evident: theſe very Scholars will, many of them, become Maſters of Families, and take Servants from the Schools; become rich, and contribute to ſupport, to enlarge, to multiply them. And they, who, by objecting that we make little Speed, are one main Cauſe of our making leſs than we ſhould otherwiſe, ought by liberal Benefactions to compenſate for paſt Diſcouragements, and aſſiſt us in proceeding quicker.

No one ſurely will affect to diſapprove, leſt he ſhould be obliged to ſubſcribe. No one can be barbarous enough to deſire the Continuance of poor Wretches in Error and Helpleſſneſs, that he may tyrannize over them with Impunity. No one can bear ſo determined an Ill-will, either to Religion, as to favour the Profeſſion of theirs, becauſe it is an abſurd one: or to the Clergy, as to oppoſe the forming of theſe Children into rational Creatures and good Subjects, becauſe They contrived and executed the Plan for it; which ought to be deemed, on the contrary, great Amends for any ſuppoſed former Neglects. No wonder, if the Project, before it took Place, were treated by many as chimerical: but now, Fact hath demonſtrated both its Practicableneſs and its Utility. Propoſals indeed may be offered for amending it in ſome Parts; though

the unexperienced ought to offer them with much Diffidence: but really, for Objections againſt the Whole there is no Room left. Both the Scheme and the Conduct of it have been more univerſally applauded by the *Iriſh* Proteſtants in general, who muſt be Judges of the Improvement, to which they are Eye-witneſſes, than ever any Thing of the Kind was before in any Country. Succeſſive Lords Lieutenants have unanimouſly recommended it to our gracious Sovereign: who, with equal Generoſity and Wiſdom, prevented the imminent Ruin of it in its Infancy, eighteen Years ago; and hath upheld it ever ſince, by an annual Donation of a Thouſand Pounds, and occaſional ones amounting to ſixteen Thouſand more. The Parliament of *Ireland* alſo, in Concurrence with the King, have ſettled on it the Produce of a new Tax; valuable in itſelf, and doubly ſo as a Teſtimonial of the Sentiments of the Legiſlature. Nay, the very Papiſts have acknowledged the Efficacy of our Schools, by ſetting up others of their own in Competition with them. And ſo far as they may do any Good, we are glad to be the Occaſion of it: but we muſt counteract the Hurt, which they may do, by a redoubled Zeal for what they are aiming to defeat.

Indeed this Charity is a publick Concern of both Nations, not only in a religious, but a political View. It relieves preſent Diſtreſſes, which always endanger the Quiet of a State, more

more or leſs; and prevents thoſe of Generations to come. In Proportion as it ſpreads, the Country will be more civilized, more cultivated, more populous, more wealthy. Theſe Children will ſtay at home: and not run abroad to ſettle in Popiſh Lands, which hitherto the Sameneſs of Belief hath made ſo agreeable to the Inhabitants of that Country. By their Induſtry, and the good Fruits of it, they will ſtir up Emulation in all of their own Rank. By their Conviction of the Truth of Proteſtantiſm, they will be ſatisfied, that the Forfeitures of their Predeceſſors, in the two laſt Centuries, for their many Rebellions in ſupport of the oppoſite Cauſe, were deſerved. They will be thoroughly diſunited from thoſe, whom they have renounced; will love their Maſters for being of the ſame Faith with them; and ſtand up for the Defence of it, on trying Occaſions, in Word and Deed. But further, even the Papiſts of *Ireland* will have Reaſon given them, by theſe Schools, to think well of their Proteſtant Neighbours, and of the Clergy in particular. Their Prieſts have ſuffered them to languiſh for Ages in Ignorance, Hunger and Nakedneſs: we beſtow on them Knowledge and Plenty. To Them they owe the Guilt of their Inſurrections and Maſſacres, the Miſery of their Attainders and Confiſcations: to Us they will owe the Bleſſing of being humanized and enriched.

Now

Now of all theſe Advantages, *Britain* muſt partake. The Wealth of that People will not only, in loyal Hands, render them a ſtrong Barrier to us, but will circulate continually from the Extremes to the Heart of Empire. Along with that, we ſhall gain a ſtill more deſirable Treaſure, their good Opinion. They will plainly perceive, that we neither hate nor deſpiſe them: that if we find it needful to reſtrain their Induſtry in ſome Things, we excite, aid and direct it in others; and zealouſly encourage what evidently conduces to their preſent, and, we are perſuaded, to their future Happineſs alſo. Then, as our Undertaking ſucceeds, we ſhall have thoſe, if wanted, for Proteſtant Soldiers in our own Troops, who elſe would be Popiſh ones in the Service of our foreign Adverſaries: and we ſhall no longer be over-run, as we are, in this Metropolis, in its Suburbs, in our Eaſtern and our Weſtern Settlements, with *Iriſh* Catholicks, as they call themſelves, to an Amount, which few of us imagine; and at which all of us, if we knew it, would be juſtly alarmed. Our Religion is loſing Ground on the Continent: we have ſo much more need to be compact, and of one Mind, at home. It is loſing Ground even amongſt ourſelves: and God give thoſe Attention to the Danger, who ought to guard us againſt it. But ſuch Care no way interferes with an Attempt of making Repriſals; and carrying the War, by means of theſe Schools,

Schools, into our Enemies Head-Quarters. If we conquer them there, we ſhall have much leſs Cauſe to be afraid of them here. The Supply will be cut off: on the Reſidue of the Party like Methods will produce like Effects. And when once they are produced, the Inhabitants of the *Britiſh* Iſles and Colonies will all have the ſame Friends and Foes: our Fellow-Subjects, whoſe Eye is now evil againſt us, will not only *for their Brethren and Companions Sakes wiſh us Proſperity, but becauſe of the Houſe of the Lord our God will ſeek to do us Good* *. Our Civil and Eccleſiaſtical Community will, in Compariſon with their preſent State, *look forth as the Morning, fair as the Moon, clear as the Sun, and terrible as an Army with Banners* †.

What then remains, but that ſo worthy a Deſign be vigorouſly executed: that we contribute to it, according to our Ability; and move others to contribute, according to our Influence? The Proteſtants of *Ireland* are doubtleſs moſt immediately concerned to exert themſelves. And yet the printed Accounts from thence intimate, what elſe we ſhould be cautious of ſaying, that all Perſons there have not been ſo bountiful as they ſhould. For ſome Years, the main Support was from *England*. And ſince that, of the *Iriſh* Subſcriptions, thoſe of the Biſhops make towards one third: and, together with thoſe of the Clergy,

* Pſ. cxxii. 8, 9. † Cant. vi. 10.

near

near one half. Yet the Utility is general: and the Laity have a much more durable Intereſt in their Eſtates, than the Clergy have in theirs; and a larger Intereſt, even in moſt Church Eſtates, than Churchmen themſelves. It is not ſtrange however, if they judged, that theſe ought to ſtand foremoſt in the Work: if they ſaw more Difficulties on the Spot, than We here could diſcern at a Diſtance; and were held back, ſomewhat too long, by Doubts of Succeſs. Beſides, though the ſtated Subſcriptions of that Country are ſmaller, than might be expected; they far exceed ours: their Preſents and Legacies have riſen to no inconſiderable Sum: and many, inſtead of Money, have given Lands. The original Formation of the Scheme too is altogether owing to the *Iriſh*: on Them alſo hath lain the Care and Labour of carrying it into Execution: ſuperintending every School, and conducting the whole Machine, from the Beginning to this Day: without which, ever ſo great Liberalities from Us would have been thrown away, and ſunk intirely.

Therefore, whilſt we remind them, that, both in Conſcience and Honour, they ſhould take on themſelves a due Share of what primarily belongs to them; let us remember how much they have taken: and though we ſhould think it not enough; let us rather try to win upon our Brethren by gentle Repreſentations, and engaging Examples of Beneficence, than reproach

reproach any of them unkindly; and yet reſemble them in that Deficiency, for which we blame them. Their Eſteem and Affection is well worth purchaſing at a much dearer Rate: for we purchaſe conſequentially Strength and Quiet to ourſelves. We were once in the ſame State of Blindneſs and Bondage, that the poor Wretches of that Iſland are: let us expreſs our Gratitude to God for freeing Us from it, by endeavouring to free Them. We have been known to them chiefly hitherto by our Victories and juſt Severities: let us now ſhew them our compaſſionate Bounty; and thus acquaint them with the true Genius of Proteſtantiſm. We have been commonly traduced amongſt them, as deſtitute of Religion: let us take this amiable Method of confuting the Imputation. We are wealthy; They are indigent: let us prove our Wealth to them in the moſt reputable, the moſt uſeful Manner. We ſend much of it continually to Nations unrelated, ill affected to us, for Things which do us no Good, but Harm: let us ſtrike off a few Articles yearly from our Vanity and Luxury; employ the Savings to advance genuine Piety, Loyalty and Induſtry, in our Siſter Iſland: and ſo benefit ourſelves and her at once. We of the Clergy ought *in all things to ſhew ourſelves Patterns of good Works**: and ſurely then for the Service of Religion, of the Proteſtant Religion, of a People ſo nearly allied to us. Amongſt our Laity alſo, *unto*

* Tit. ii. 7.

whom-

whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall much be required *, on all fitting Occaſions. And there ought to be in every Man, though poſſeſſed only of moderate Fortunes, *a willing Mind, according to that he hath* †. But however excuſable many ſuch may be; they who are ſprung from *Ireland*, certainly ought to diſtinguiſh themſelves in forwarding this Charity: their Relation demands it of them. They, who have Eſtates there, or Incomes of any Sort ariſing from thence, ſhould be liberal to it, beyond others, who have no ſuch Connexions. For it is natural to be generous peculiarly in the Place, from which their Capacity of being generous proceeds. And the more their Circumſtances and Stations point out to them to reſide in that Place; if they do not, the more ample Amends they ſhould make it ſome other Way: beſides that what is expended there to encourage Labour and Liberty, will ere long greatly encreaſe the Produce, the Rent, the Value of each Perſons Lands.

Theſe Conſiderations are laid before you, ſolely for your cool Reflexion in Retirement. No Advantage will be taken of any ſudden Impreſſion, which they may poſſibly make now; or of the Willingneſs to give, or Shame to refuſe, that might accompany the ſocial Meal, which is to follow our preſent Aſſembly. This is treating you with ſingular Deli-

* Luke xii. 48. † 2 Cor. viii. 12.

cacy

cacy and Respect. Certainly it will not fail of moving you to the proper Return, of such voluntary deliberate Donations, yearly or occasional, as best evidence a free Heart. Where they will be received, is publickly advertised.

But then, whilst we join with our Friends of that Kingdom in what we can both do, we must rely on them absolutely for what Inspectors alone can do. Much Praise, we are sensible, they have merited on that Account, from the highest to the lowest. We can only exhort them, and we know they will *suffer the Word of Exhortation, to abound more and more* *: to re-examine frequently the Plan, and see what may be corrected or improved in it; the Management, and see what may insensibly have gone wrong, or been relaxed: to hear Objections attentively and candidly, both from Approvers and Disapprovers of the Scheme; for amongst the latter may be Persons of Consequence and of Value, though under the Dominion of Prejudices: to rectify or vindicate Things, as the Case requires; and *not let their Good be evil spoken of* †. The Choice of Masters and Mistresses for the Schools is a most essential Article of their Trust. These ought never to be taken from Motives of Self-Interest, Importunity, Compassion, Cheapness; or any other, than a well-grounded Persuasion, that they are qualified,

* Heb. xiii. 22. 1 Thess. iv. 1. † Rom. xiv. 16.

by

by their ſerious and practical Faith in the Proteſtant Religion, their Skill and Diligence, their Spirit and Temper, to teach the Children, committed to them, their Duty to God and the King, together with the Means of getting an honeſt Livelihood. For neither of theſe, without the other, will ſuffice. But as keeping them to Work may be more for the private Emolument of the Maſter or Miſtreſs, than principling them well; and a Failure in the former is more eaſily perceived: there muſt be a cloſer Watchfulneſs over the latter. Yet they are not to be taught an uncharitable Vehemence againſt Papiſts, like theirs againſt Us; much leſs an Imagination, that ſuch Bitterneſs is Religion enough: but a fervent Affection for the Doctrines and Precepts of primitive Chriſtianity, with a conſcientious Dread of *making* either *of none Effect through the Commandments and Traditions of Men* *. At the ſame Time, whatever Indulgence, whatever Appearance, may exalt them, either in Reality, or but in Fancy, beyond their due Rank, is to be prohibited moſt peremptorily. If Knowledge of Accounts, or even of Writing, will tempt them to think they are above the meaneſt Buſineſs: they had much better have little or none of it imparted to them. And in all Reſpects they ſhould be brought up ſo, as will induce them to look upon their ſubſequent Apprenticeſhip in the Light of a Preferment.

* Mark vii. 7, 13. Col. ii. 8.

For

For preſerving the Inſtitution in this Vigour, it will be extremely material to keep a frequent Correſpondence, entring into Particulars, with the local Committee of every School; to compare the Management of one with another, diffuſe the Notice of whatever good Oeconomy hath been any where introduced; and recommend it to all, who can properly make Trial of it. Once * a prudent and experienced Perſon was ſent to viſit a conſiderable Part of theſe Foundations: to examine their State, and propoſe Diminutions of Expences, Improvements of their Lands, uſeful Regulations of various Kinds. Poſſibly a Repetition of this Practice, at moderate Intervals, with a Report to the Committee at *Dublin* of what had appeared on the Inquiry, might have more good Conſequences, than can be at preſent diſtinctly foreſeen.

In putting the Children out, it is of the utmoſt Moment, that the Perſons, who take them, be not only nominal Proteſtants, but real Chriſtians. For indeed they had better turn Papiſts again, than become ſuch Profligates, as the Examples and common Talk, it may be feared, of ſome Families would make them. They had better think wrong in ſeveral Articles of Religion, than ſcorn the Whole: and be ready to do Miſchief in particular Points occaſionally, than in all conſtantly. But one would contrive moſt ſtudiouſly to

* In the Year 1746.

ſecure them from both: and for that Purpoſe, if poſſible, not to place them with Popiſh Fellow-Servants; at leaſt without a Mixture of others. And if thoſe who are intruſted with them, would but have the Goodneſs to beſtow ſome peculiar Attention on their moral and religious Conduct, it might often prevent the Loſs of all that had been done before: and both they, and the reſt of their Houſe, as well as the poor Children, would be the better for it.

The Prieſts, we are told, purſue them to the remoteſt Corners of the Iſland, in Hopes of recovering them. Surely then We ſhould be as anxious to retain them. But above all, the Miniſters of their Pariſhes ought to eye them without Intermiſſion; inculcate upon them the moſt earneſt Cautions not to diſcredit their Education; and engage them in the firmeſt Promiſes, whenever they are attacked, either in Point of Doctrines or Duties, to apply for Help from Them immediately. Our Adverſaries obtain and perpetuate their Influence over their People, by having much Intercourſe with them, by letting themſelves down to them. *They are wiſe in their Generation**. If we hope to be a Match for them, we muſt imitate them. And then, as They act thus partly for their own private Ends, and We can do it only out of Kindneſs, we ſhall ſo far have the Advantage. Not for this Rea-

* Luke xvi. 8.

ſon

ſon only, but for many more, Miniſters ought to reſide in their Pariſhes, and *ſow Spiritual Things* where *they reap Carnal* *. The Legiſlature ought firſt to make Proviſion for Reſidence in a ſufficient Number of Places, then to require it. And mere perſonal Abode, with a legal Performance of ſtated Offices, ought by no Means to be regarded as the Subſtance of parochial Duty. It is not a formal and indolent, much leſs a gay and voluptuous, but a ſelf-denying, condeſcending, pains-taking Clergy, that will do Good: who are *inſtant in Seaſon and out of Seaſon* †: who *knowing the Terrors of the Lord, perſuade Men* ‡ to avoid them; who loving his Promiſes, invite Men to partake of them. Now, if the Laity would have ſuch Paſtors as theſe, they muſt prefer and recommend ſuch, diſcountenancing others. And if they would have the Labours of theſe effectual, they muſt permit them to have a due Effect upon themſelves. Elſe our Religion will be reproached and blaſphemed for their Sakes: which, would they obſerve its Rules, we might hope to ſee honoured and embraced. For it is remarkable, that in thoſe Counties of *Ireland*, where Proteſtants are ſtricteſt, Papiſts are feweſt.

But then, if whilſt We in *England* ſay theſe Things to our Neighbours over the Water, we ſet them a Pattern of doing the contrary; if our Laity are profane, if our Clergy are

* 1 Cor. ix. 11. † 2 Tim. iv 2. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 11.

ſupine: we ſhall exhort Them with an ill Grace and ſmall Succeſs. Therefore let Us begin to amend, and there will be ſome Proſpect of Their following. Or if They begin, let Us think it more Honour to copy them in what is right, than to lead them in what is wrong. And God grant we may Both *conſider one another, to provoke unto Love and good Works; and ſo much the more, as we ſee the Day approaching* *: too probably the Day of national Calamity, unleſs we avert it by a ſpeedy Reformation; but certainly the Day of Death, and that awful *Account*, which *every one ſhall give of himſelf to God* †.

* Heb. x. 4, 25. † Rom. xiv. 12,

SER-

SERMON XIII.

Preached in the Pariſh-Church of St. *Mary, Lambeth, Nov.* 5, 1758.

JOHN xvi. 2, 3.

They ſhall put you out of the Synagogues: yea, the Time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, will think, that he doth God Service.
And theſe Things will they do unto you, becauſe they have not known the Father, nor me.

THE various Evils of human Life are, all of them, juſt Matter of ſerious and melancholy Conſideration: but each in its due Proportion and Degree. Such of them, as flow of Neceſſity from that Order of Things, which Providence eſtabliſhed in Conſequence of Man's original Tranſgreſſion, are undoubtedly very heavy and afflicting: Labour, Pain, Sickneſs, Death; whether befalling Us, or our Friends. But a great Alleviation of them is, that God inflicts them on us, not Man; and uſes them to ſerve excellent Purpoſes, of teaching us Reſignation to Himſelf, and Compaſſion to each other; of weaning us from this World, and exciting in our Hearts earneſt Deſires of a

better. So that these Calamities, being a wholesome, though rough, Exercise of our Virtue and Piety, may be considered, in this View, with Comfort enough. But such as proceed from our own mutual Injuries, though even these *work together for Good to them that love God**, are a Ground for much deeper Concern: for here is Guilt, as well as Suffering: Mankind not only multiplying present Torments, very needlessly, one to another, but treasuring up future and eternal ones to themselves: defeating, as far as Creatures are able, the gracious Designs of the Creator of all; and turning his World into the very contrary of what he intended it should be.

Well might one have hoped, that our natural Principles of Humanity, at least of Religion, would have so far restrained us, that Evils of this Kind, if they existed at all, should not be frequent, or extreme. But early and general Experience hath too fully confuted such Imaginations. However, when Revelation came in to the Aid of Reason, giving so much clearer Notice of our Duty, and stronger Motives to it; one should firmly have expected, that the Voice of God, speaking expressly from Heaven, must have produced a general and a lasting Reformation. But, instead of this, a new Gloom arises from hence, to make our View still more discouraging. We see revealed Religion, as well as natural, profess-

* Rom. viii. 28.

edly

edly ſcorned by many, and ſeriouſly regarded by very few. Yet, though it hath but little Influence, were all that Influence good, there would ſtill be ſome Joy. But to have the very *Light, which is in us, become Darkneſs* *; and what was calculated, beyond all Things, to make us good and happy, perverted to make us wicked and miſerable, this completes the Sorrow.

Yet ſo it is: *the Gold itſelf is become dim; the moſt fine Gold changed* †. The Piety of the patriarchal Ages degenerated very early into pernicious Idolatries, full of Rites impure and barbarous. And no ſooner almoſt were the *Jews* reformed effectually from the Worſhip of falſe Gods, than their Zeal for the true one became, by Degrees, ſo blind and fierce, that the Condition of many of them might ſeem not to be extremely altered for the better. Towards the Heathen, and one another, indeed their Bitterneſs might uſually defend itſelf by the Plea of antecedent Provocation: but their Treatment of Chriſtianity, when it appeared, was void of all Excuſe. That perfectly benevolent Doctrine, recommended to them by every Inſtance of unmixed Goodneſs attending its Delivery, if it had not Charms enough to attract their Love, had ſurely nothing to excite their Hatred. Yet ſuch was the Turn of this perverſe Nation, that even their own Meſſiah, *the Hope of Iſrael* ‡, con-

* Matth. vi. 23. † Lam. iv. 1. ‡ Acts xxviii. 20.

tradicting their favourite Scheme, of devoutly indulging their Luſts, and piouſly tyrannizing over the reſt of the World; they crucified Him, and purſued his Followers, with that inhuman Bigotry, which, in the Words of the Text, he foretold they would.

Nor did this wicked Spirit actuate Them alone: but the Heathens alſo, who had borne, for the moſt Part, very patiently, with the infinite Variety of one anothers Gods; who had long borne with the *Jewiſh* Religion, as oppoſite to all their own, as could be; yet perſecuted the Chriſtians with a moſt barbarous Rage, for three hundred Years: till at length, triumphing over Cruelty with mere Patience and Innocence, it gradually became the eſtabliſhed Belief of the *Roman* Empire.

And then, at leaſt, would a compaſſionate Spectator of the Courſe of this World, tired out with the Sins and Miſeries of it, have ſurely thought, the Time muſt be come now, to *lift up his Head* *, and rejoice in the happy Change. For who could poſſibly imagine, that the Profeſſors of ſo merciful a Religion, eſpecially after experiencing ſo long the Evil of Perſecution themſelves, would ever be brought to exerciſe it on their own Brethren. *But how then ſhould the Scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it muſt be* †? The Wiſdom of God foreſaw

* Luke xxi. 28. † Matth. xxvi. 54.

and

and foretold, what could not but ſeem to the firſt Diſciples very incredible in itſelf, that, by quick Degrees, their Succeſſors would bring into the Chriſtian Church almoſt all the Corruptions, which they had heard their Maſter condemn in the *Jewiſh:* human Additions to the Law of God; human *Traditions*, that *made it of no Effect* *; diſhoneſt Zeal to gain Proſelytes; implacable Reſentment againſt all, who differed from them.

Too ſoon, and too wide, did theſe Offences ſpread among the profeſſed Followers of Chriſt: and would God any Part of them were quite innocent, that ever had the Power of being guilty. But unſpeakably the deepeſt Root did this Evil take in the See of *Rome:* which begun ſurprizingly early to verify of itſelf one Part of our Saviour's Words, by *putting out of the Synagogue*, excommunicating, or at leaſt attempting to excommunicate, without Cauſe, the Churches of *Aſia*, in the Controverſy of Eaſter: and employed afterwards, at ſome Times the Dignity of the Imperial Seat, at others the Reverence of a principal apoſtolick Foundation, to obtain continually freſh Acceſſions of Power; till at length a Biſhop of that See in the ſeventh Century † aſſumed the Title, which his almoſt immediate Predeceſſor ‡ had declared to be a Mark of Antichriſt; that of the Univerſal Paſtor of Chriſt's

* Matth. xv. 6. Mark vii. 13. † *Boniface* the Third.
‡ *Gregory* the Firſt.

Church.

Church. And his Succeſſors took effectual Care, that it ſhould be fed with ſuch Doctrines moſt diligently, as were moſt ſubſervient to their wicked Deſigns. All, who oppoſed any of their Novelties, but eſpecially any new Claim of Authority, they proſecuted with infinitely greater Vehemence, than if guilty of the groſſeſt Immoralities: and not only ſubjected them to the utmoſt Rigour of ſpiritual Cenſures, but to the heavieſt temporal Penalties that they could; and, at length, to Death itſelf.

Even over Princes, in proceſs of Time, was this unwarrantable Dominion extended: and having often been exerciſed in fact, was in the laſt Place openly aſſerted, as a juſt Right. For the fourth Council of *Lateran*, held in the Year 1215, and pretended to be a general, and therefore infallible one, after beginning with a Creed, of which Tranſubſtantiation, then firſt eſtabliſhed, made a Part; proceeds, in the third Canon, to decree, "that "all Deniers of that, or any other of the "[pretended] Catholick Doctrines, be excom-"municated, and puniſhed by the ſecular Arm: "that all, who are ſuſpected, unleſs they clear "themſelves within a Year, be deemed Here-"ticks; and that all civil Powers, of what "Rank ſoever, be admoniſhed, and, if Need "require, compelled by eccleſiaſtical Cenſures, "to ſwear, that they will extirpate all Here-"ticks out of their Territories: and if any of "them

" them refuſes it, that he alſo be excommuni-
" cated; and if he give not Satisfaction with-
" in a Year, the Pope ſhall declare his Sub-
" jects to be free from their Oath of Fidelity,
" and give his Dominions to Catholicks;
" who driving Hereſy out of them, may poſ-
" ſeſs them without Contradiction, and pre-
" ſerve them in the Purity of the Faith."
Theſe are the Words of that Canon. Nay further ſtill; the ſame Council gives to all, who, taking upon them the Badge of the Croſs, ſhall fight againſt Hereticks, the ſame ſpiritual Privileges and Indulgences, as if they fought againſt Infidels. For making War on the latter, merely for the Sake of their Religion, though a moſt unchriſtian Employment, they had already, for ſelfiſh Ends, taught to be meritorious. And having now raiſed fighting againſt the former to the ſame Degree of Merit, they ſoon effected the Deſtruction not only of the *Albigenſes*, a very blameable Sect, but of the poor *Waldenſes* likewiſe, much better Believers than themſelves; thus fulfilling the ſecond Part of our Saviour's Prediction, *Yea, the Time cometh, that whoſoever killeth you, will think, that he doth God Service.*

After theſe Beginnings, the Inſtances, that followed, of Popiſh Uſurpation, Treachery and Cruelty, in every Nation of *Europe*, every Nation upon Earth, in which Popery hath got Footing, have been ſo numerous, that the Time would fail me even to name them: and therefore

fore I shall confine myself to a general mention of such, as have happened in a Country, which, God be thanked, hath felt much less of them, than many others; I mean our own. And this I shall do without Bitterness, far from exaggerating any one Fact, or dwelling with the least Pleasure on Things so dishonourable to the Christian Profession; and much too mournful to be remembered, if it were safe to forget them.

No sooner * had King *Henry* the Eighth been declared, what he undoubtedly was, the supreme Head of the Clergy as well as Laity, in his own Kingdom; but, though he had meddled with no one Point of the *Romish* Doctrine besides; nay, was so far from being a Protestant, that all his Life long he burnt others for being so; yet Pope *Paul* the Third pronounced him, by a Bull, to have forfeited his Crown, required all his Subjects to revolt from him; and all Christian Kings to make War upon him. And in fact this produced some dangerous Insurrections, both in his Reign, and that of his Son *Edward* the Sixth; under whom no Papist was put to Death on Account of Religion, excepting such as rebelled on Account of it. How destructive to Protestants the short Reign of his Sister Queen

* The following Facts are chiefly taken from *Foulis*'s History of *Romish* Treasons, fol. 1673, a Discourse concerning the Original of the Powder Plot, 4to. 1674, and a Book intitled, *The Gunpowder Treason*, republished, with a Preface by Bishop *Barlow*, 8vo, 1679.

Mary was, notwithſtanding their raiſing her to the Throne, and notwithſtanding her ſolemn Promiſes to them, we all know. Yet, in the firſt ten Years of her Succeſſor Queen *Elizabeth*, not one Papiſt, not one of the Perſecutors, ſuffered; but all enjoyed quietly the private Exerciſe of their own Worſhip. Indeed almoſt all of them conformed publickly to the eſtabliſhed Church; till, in her eleventh Year, Pope *Pius* the Fifth forbad it; and finding his ſecret Deſigns ineffectual, commanded, by a Bull, the whole Nation to rebel againſt her; and denounced a Curſe againſt all, that ſhould obey her: which Order of his a daring Traitor publiſhed in the City of *London*; and receiving for it the Reward, which he deſerved, is the firſt Martyr, of whom the *Romaniſts* have to boaſt in her Reign: for a real Martyr they account him. And the famous *Thuanus*, a *French* Hiſtorian of their own Communion, having called this Man's Deed a raſh Action; even ſo gentle a Cenſure was ordered by the Court of *Rome* to be ſtruck out of his Book.

Immediately after this, they began to ſeparate from the Church, and rebel againſt the State: and though very unſucceſsful, yet held themſelves bound by the Pope's Anathema to rebel on; till his Succeſſor, *Gregory* the Thirteenth, pitying the Dangers, to which they had expoſed themſelves, for ten Years together, gave them at length a Permiſſion in Form

Form to be quiet; provided it were no longer, than till the abovementioned Bull could be openly executed. In the mean while, another Method was taken, of private Attempts to murder the Queen. Many ſuch there were; and almoſt all of them encouraged by the Confeſſors of the Wretches, who engaged in them: particularly by thoſe of that new invented Order, which hath profanely diſtinguiſhed, by the Name of the meek and holy *Jeſus*, the moſt bloody and faithleſs Combination of Men, whom the Sun ever beheld; among whoſe fundamental Conſtitutions it is, that whatever their Superior commands, they ſhall always think lawful; and renouncing blindly their own Judgment, receive the Word, that comes out of his Mouth, as that of Chriſt himſelf. This is that Society, which one of themſelves, Father *Campian*, in a Letter to Queen *Elizabeth*'s Council, declares, have entered into a Covenant, to deſtroy, by all Methods they can, all Heretick Princes; in which, he ſays, they will perſiſt, ſo long as one of them remains in Being. And this Man alſo, being executed here for Treaſon, is reputed by his Brethren a Martyr.

No Wonder, if in ſuch a State of Things, at length ſevere Laws were made. None ſuch had been made in the firſt twelve Years of the Queen's Reign: nor was it capital for Prieſts to be in *England*, till the twenty-ſeventh: when the better Sort, even of themſelves, acknowledged

knowledged the Treaſons of the reſt to have deſerved it. After this, freſh Attempts followed; the Spaniſh Invaſion, and the *Iriſh* Rebellion, both excited and bleſſed by the Pope: beſides Endeavours to raiſe Inſurrections here; in which *Garnet*, the Superior of the *Engliſh* Jeſuits, was deeply concerned: to whom, as himſelf owned, Orders were ſent by the Pope, forbidding all Catholicks to admit any Perſon for King, on the Queen's Death, however near in Blood, unleſs he would ſwear to promote their Cauſe to the utmoſt of his Power. But failing of Succeſs, he procured a Pardon from King *James* for all his paſt Treaſons, and then immediately proceeded to commit new ones.

For in the firſt Year of that Monarch's Reign was the execrable Deſign of this Day formed, though Accidents deferred its Execution. He, in the mean Time, permitted no Severity againſt Papiſts, excepting two Prieſts who ſuffered for a treaſonable Plot; ſpoke favourably of them to his Parliament, honoured ſeveral of them with Acceſs to his Perſon, with Knighthood; with Regards, that made ſome of his Proteſtant Subjects jealous. Yet did not all this hinder the Conſpirators from purſuing ſteadily the moſt ſhocking Deſign, that ever entered into the Heart of Man. A ſmall Scruple indeed ſome of them had; that a few of their own Communion muſt have died with the reſt. But this was

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ſoon removed by their Confeſſors; and the holy Sacrament made the Bond of ſo horrid an Impiety. Meaſures were concerted for an Inſurrection at home, for an Invaſion from abroad to ſupport it: Prayers offered up, both here and at *Rome*, for the Succeſs of their Enterprize: which a good Providence diſcovered, but a few Hours before it was to have been executed. Then they broke out into a deſperate Attempt of an open Rebellion, in which ſome of them periſhed; ſome, that were taken, gloried in their Deſign to the laſt: others indeed condemned themſelves: and a great Part of their Communion condemn them now, as is the uſual Fate of unſucceſsful Treaſons. Yet *Garnet*, who was executed for it, and owned himſelf privy to it, paſſes amongſt them for a Saint and Martyr. *Teſmond*, another Jeſuit concerned in it, eſcaping to *Rome*, was made Penitentiary to the Pope: who himſelf, as one of the ſame Order affirms, was acquainted with the Deſign, and had proper Bulls ready to iſſue on the Succeſs of it.

After this Diſcovery, alarming as it was, the moſt moderate Counſels were taken; and an Oath formed, to diſtinguiſh the better Sort of them from the reſt: in which they were only to engage, that notwithſtanding any Bull or Diſpenſation from the Pope, they would bear true Faith and Allegiance to the King. Many amongſt them took this: but immediately what they had done was condemned

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at *Rome*: *Blackwell*, their Archprieſt here, was deprived of his Dignity, for being one of them: and all Catholicks were commanded abſolutely to ſuffer Death, if Need were, rather than take the Oath.

In the Reign of King *Charles* the Firſt, the ſame Prohibition was repeated: and the *Iriſh* Maſſacre of ſo many thouſand Proteſtants, in cold Blood, gave a new Proof of Popiſh Treachery and Inhumanity. With a very ill Grace did they pretend, after this, to diſtinguiſh themſelves for good Subjects in the two next Reigns: when, to paſs over the Popiſh Plot in the former, the Conduct of the latter too fully ſhewed, at what Point all this boaſted Loyalty was aimed. They had perverted that unhappy Prince, King *James* the Second, to an enthuſiaſtick Zeal for their Faith, and of conſequence for reſtoring it here. In vain did he take the moſt ſolemn Oaths to maintain our Religion and Liberties. He could not prevail on himſelf to put on the Appearance of keeping them, even for a few Years: but invaded the whole Conſtitution with ſuch haſty Steps to its Ruin, that our Fathers beheld Popery ruſhing inſtantly upon them, armed with all the Terrors of arbitrary Power; and, beſides the ancient Inſtances of its Barbarity, they had a dreadful freſh one juſt before their Eyes, in the miſerable Baniſhment of their Brethren, the *French* Proteſtants, contrary to all Faith, to all Pity. But, juſt when every Thing,

which they feared, was beginning to fall on them in this Nation, and had begun to fall on them in *Ireland*; then it pleaſed God to endear to us a ſecond Time this Day, by the Landing of our great Deliverer; who ſucceeded to the Throne, left vacant; and from whom is derived to us, we hope, a perpetual Security in our preſent happy Eſtabliſhment.

Moved by this Recital of the dreadful Evils, which religious Intolerance hath committed and attempted; ſome perhaps may accuſe Religion itſelf, as hurtful to Society. And undoubtedly falſe Notions of it may be detrimental, and ſometimes even pernicious. But ſo may falſe Notions of parental Affection, conjugal Tenderneſs, Gratitude, every Motive to Action. Yet this was never thought an Argument againſt the Principles themſelves. And if any Thing be fitted to do Good and no Harm on Earth, true Religion certainly is. Natural Religion is univerſally acknowledged to be mild and humane. Chriſtianity indeed ſome have done their utmoſt to pervert. But let either the bittereſt Zealot, or the moſt bigotted Infidel, ſhew, if they can, one Inſtance, in which the Goſpel gives the leaſt Pretence for pious Cruelty. Every where it breathes Mildneſs, Patience, Forbearance: enjoins Chriſtians, of ever ſo different Opinions, to receive one another in mutual Charity: and even, of thoſe who are no Chriſtians, it permits us not to judge hardly; much leſs to uſe them

them unmercifully. If then ſome, who profeſs this Faith, will act in Defiance to it, let them bear their Condemnation. But to charge their Guilt on Chriſtianity, would be like cenſuring the legal Conſtitution of any Government, becauſe they, who rebel againſt it, behave unjuſtifiably. For indeed the Spirit of Perſecution is Rebellion againſt Chriſt, under Pretence of a Commiſſion from him: it is *the Man of Sin, ſitting as God in the Temple of God* *. And where it is not deſigned Impiety, it is the groſſeſt Ignorance, both of the Attributes of our Maker, and the Precepts of our Redeemer, as the Words of the Text expreſsly declare: *Theſe Things will they do unto you, becauſe they have not known the Father nor me.* And the Remedy for this Evil is, not caſting off the Regard, which we owe to God, but eſtabliſhing juſt and worthy Notions of his Service in the Minds of Men: which, in Proportion as they prevail, will baniſh Enthuſiaſm and Superſtition from off the Earth: whereas, if true Religion be once loſt, every abſurd Opinion, as well as miſchievous Practice, may ſpring up in its ſtead. If Atheiſm could take Place, it muſt viſibly be the Ruin of Society. But it cannot. There is an irreſiſtible Bent in the human Mind to reverence an inviſible Power: and if Men are not directed to do it in a right Manner, they will do it in a wrong. Therefore the certain Conſequence of abandoning true Piety, is becom-

* 1 Theſſ. ii. 3, 4.

ing a Prey to falſe. And accordingly the Emiſſaries of the Church of *Rome* have never been either more active, or more ſucceſsful, than ſince the aſtoniſhing Increaſe of Profaneneſs, and Indifference to Religion, amongſt us, have given them ſo unguarded an Opening for the re-eſtabliſhing their ancient Dominion.

Still how unjuſt ſoever it may be to think hardly of Chriſtianity on their Account, yet at leaſt theſe Corrupters of it, perhaps we may think, cannot well be abhorred too much, or treated too ſeverely. But God forbid, that we ſhould imitate, however provoked, what we condemn; or charge on every particular Papiſt, what we cannot but charge on Popery in general. Many of them doubtleſs are well-meaning Perſons, from whom both the Principles, and the Practices above mentioned, are concealed, as much as ever they can, by artful Diſguiſes, or bold Denials; and who think in their Conſciences, that nothing ſhould induce Them to commit the Crimes, of which their Forefathers have been accuſed. Yet notwithſtanding, were that Authority, in which they profeſs an implicit Faith, to command their Aſſiſtance in ever ſo wicked an Enterprize, at a critical Juncture; on what Grounds the moſt unwilling of them all could refuſe, one doth not ſee. In the mean while indeed they may be much better Perſons, than their Religion, did they know the Depths of it, would

would allow them to be. And even amongſt the worſt of them, great Numbers may be intitled to our Saviour's Plea for his Crucifiers: *Father forgive them: for they know not what they do* *. But ſuch ignorant Zeal, though it alleviates their Guilt, increaſes the Danger from them: and they muſt allow Communities of a different Faith, to defend themſelves againſt that Danger moſt watchfully.

Ours hath done it by penal Statutes, terrible in Appearance, but extorted by the Neceſſity of the Times; and ſo entirely ſuſpended, as that Neceſſity leſſened, that they, who have every where broke through all Laws, divine and human, to deſtroy the Proteſtant Religion, without ſparing it in a ſingle Inſtance, where they could ſuppreſs it with Safety, have long enjoyed unmoleſted the Exerciſe of their own, notwithſtanding ſo many legal Proviſions to the contrary, notwithſtanding their numerous Attempts againſt former Government, notwithſtanding their general Refuſal to own and give Security to the preſent. God forbid, that we ſhould envy them this Indulgence: God grant, they may learn to imitate our Mildneſs! Of that indeed there is little Hope. Yet ſtill let Us continue to act, as Chriſtians ought; and add to the publick Lenity of our Superiors, every prudent Inſtance of kind Behaviour in private Life: never indeed affecting or entering

* Luke xxiii. 34.

into dangerous Intimacies with them, but never giving needleſs Provocation, even to the worſt; much leſs grieving the better-minded, by upbraiding Remembrances of paſt Things. Let us in every other Reſpect abſolutely forget all, that they have done or attempted: only not forget due Thankfulneſs to God, that they have not ſucceeded hitherto; and due Precaution that they may not ſucceed hereafter; either by open Force, or ſuch private Arts of increaſing the Number of their Proſelytes, as may enable them to uſe Force when they will. For the Spirit of that Church, though ſtudiouſly concealed, is ſtill the ſame. Not one of the vileſt Actions, done to ſerve it, have they ever by publick Authority condemned, liberal as they are of Condemnations in other Caſes; not one of the moſt extravagant Claims, made in Favour of it, have they ever diſowned. And they cannot diſown with common Modeſty, though they force themſelves to do it ſometimes, that they hold all Promiſes and Oaths to be void, which they make to the Prejudice of their Religion or Church: for it is the expreſs Language of their infallible Guides, their Popes and their Councils. It is very true, their Practices of late have not been ſo enormous, as formerly: the Temper of Mankind is milder; their Influences on the Princes of the Earth is leſs; and they have the Wiſdom not to threaten, while they cannot ſtrike. But remember, our Days have known the bloody Executions of

Thorn,

Thorn, and the mercileſs Baniſhments of *Saltzburg*; the Inquiſition of *Spain* ſubſiſts in its full Force; the Impriſonments, the Confiſcations, the Inſlaving, the Murdering of our Proteſtant Brethren in *France*, have been revived within theſe few Years, with the bittereſt Fury, though entirely unprovoked. And if we will truſt thoſe, who continue to ſhew, by ſuch Marks, what they are; our Folly will deſerve every Thing, which we can ſuffer.

Now what have we to ſecure us from all the Errors, and all the Cruelties, of this moſt corrupt and tyrannical Church? Not one Thing, under God, but the Support of the Government, which we now enjoy; and have ſeen attacked by a formidable Rebellion, in Favour of a bigotted Member of that Communion. How then ſhall we ſupport, and ſtrengthen effectually, an Eſtabliſhment, ſo eſſential to our Happineſs? By hearty and active Loyalty, honeſt and diſintereſted publick Spirit, firm and friendly Union: but above all, by ſerious Repentance, and Amendment of our Ways, with fervent Prayers to the great Diſpoſer of all Things for his Protection. And may it pleaſe him to deliver us, in Time to come, as, bleſſed be his Name, he hath in Time paſt; not for our Righteouſneſs, but for his own Mercies Sake: to *break the Power of the Ungodly and Malicious* *; aboliſh Perſecu-

* Pſ. x. 17.

tion, Tyranny and Injuſtice, amongſt Men; and graciouſly haſten the promiſed Time, when *the Wolf ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard lie down with the Kid:* when *none ſhall hurt or deſtroy in all his holy Mountain; for the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the Lord, as the Waters cover the Sea*.*

* Iſ. xi. 6, 9.

SER-

SERMON XIV.

Preached in the Pariſh-Church of St. *Mary, Lambeth, Oct.* 25, 1761.

TIT. iii. 1, 2.

Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magiſtrates; to be ready to every good Work:
To ſpeak evil of no Man; to be no Brawlers, but gentle; ſhewing all Meekneſs unto all Men.

THIS is the firſt Anniverſary of the Day, on which we loſt, very unexpectedly, a Sovereign, under whoſe juſt and mild and prudent Adminiſtration we had lived, in Freedom, Safety and Plenty, above thirty-three Years. The Mercy of Providence, unworthy as we are of it, hath filled his Place with a moſt pious and gracious, amiable and reſpectable Prince; who hath hitherto given us Cauſe to hope, from his Government, for every Thing that we can wiſh. Our joint Thankſgivings have juſt now, with the greateſt Reaſon, been offered up to God for ſo important a Bleſſing; together with our earneſt Prayers, which indeed we repeat as often as we aſſemble

ble here, for his long Life and Proſperity. But the moſt acceptable Expreſſion of our Gratitude will be, to perform, every one of us, diligently the ſeveral Duties of loyal Subjects, that belong to our reſpective Stations. And theſe the Paſſage of Scripture, which I have read to you, comprehends ſo fully, and ranges them in ſo natural an Order, that explaining and enforcing the Precepts of it, as they lie there, will give a ſufficient View of all that is incumbent on us in this Matter.

Put them in mind to be ſubject to Principalities and Powers, to obey Magiſtrates. Theſe Phraſes have the ſame Meaning: only the Variety of them ſerves to ſet forth the Obligation the more completely, and preſs it the more earneſtly: as indeed there are few, that deſerve a greater Regard.

Human Kind, from early Ages, have lived collected into large Numbers: and our Nature and Circumſtances plainly require, that we ſhould. We experience an inward Propenſion to aſſemble and unite: and are by the Faculty of Speech peculiarly qualified for it. We have many Affections, and the Seeds of many Virtues, planted in us; which a more ſolitary Life would give us very little Room to exerciſe or cultivate: and many Wants and Neceſſities belong to our Condition, which nothing can tolerably well ſupply, but an extenſive Intercourſe of Man with Man. We

cannot

cannot therefore either improve or enjoy ourſelves, as God deſigned, but in Society: and Society cannot ſubſiſt, without a due Subordination of one Part of it to another; that is, without Government and Obedience. The Appetites, the Paſſions, the Caprices of Men, would be always leading them to diſquiet their Neighbours, if they were not reſtrained by Authority. And a publick Direction is further neceſſary, both for Defence againſt external Dangers, and for eſtabliſhing inward Order in the Community. For even the beſt meant Endeavours of each Particular for the general Benefit, would be almoſt always ineffectual, and often prejudicial, unleſs they were conducted by the general Wiſdom. Then beſides, the civil Power is eminently uſeful, by the Sanctions of its Laws, to what concerns us yet more nearly, the Reformation of our Morals, and bettering our Tempers. For though Rewards and Puniſhments have no immediate Efficacy to make a Change within: yet regulating our Behaviour will of courſe by Degrees contribute to mend our Hearts. Human Laws indeed cannot extend to all our Actions: but to many of the moſt material they can: putting it out of Men's Power to do the Evil, which elſe they would, or ſtopping them ſhort before they are gone far: *ſaving* ſome *by Fear* *, making others wiſe by Experience, extirpating the Incorrigible; and obliging every one to ſet all around him a Pat-

* Jude Ver. 23.

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tern of innocent and regular Living. But then laſtly, as a right Belief in God, and his various Diſpenſations towards Men, promotes, beyond all Things, both the Virtue and the Happineſs of Mankind; another chief Advantage of good Government is, that whereas without it, moſt Men would either through Ignorance be deſtitute of religious Principles, or by their own Folly, or the Fraud of others, led into abſurd and pernicious ones: it kindly makes Proviſion for them of a rational Method of Inſtruction and Worſhip: not obtruding it on them by Force, but propoſing and recommending it, which will always ſuffice: and thus they are guarded, at once, from the dreadful Evils both of Impiety and Superſtition; and carefully taught to diſcharge the Duties, and bear the Afflictions, of human Life.

Government therefore being ſo powerfully conducive to the Attainment of theſe moſt valuable Ends, which doubtleſs our Maker deſigned to be attained, the Eſtabliſhment of it in the World ought conſequently to be regarded, as a moſt important Law of God and Nature, directly flowing from the Conſtitution of Things. And what Reaſon teaches, Revelation expreſsly confirms: declaring, that the civil Power is *the Ordinance of God*; and They, who exerciſe it, *His Miniſters of Good to Men* *: from which Premiſes the Apoſtle's Concluſion in the ſame Place is undeniable:

* Rom. xiii. 1, 2, 4.

Where-

*Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject, not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience Sake**. Whoever then refuſes due Submiſſion to the Authority, which Providence hath placed him peaceably under; though we ought to judge of him as charitably as with Reaſon we can, if he pleads Conſcience for it; is, at leaſt undeſignedly, guilty of diſobeying the Appointment of Heaven, in a Matter of the utmoſt Conſequence to the Good of Mankind. I do not, by this, enjoin Obedience to whatever Power may ſtart up, and maintain itſelf, in Times of publick Confuſion, for a while, by the Sword: but to ſuch only, as is fully and quietly ſettled, and acknowledged by the general Conſent of the Community. Our Duty becomes ſuch, in this Caſe, only for the Sake of our common Good. And therefore, not they, who think they ought, and ſay they would protect us, but they who can and do, are to be owned and obeyed. The Nature of the Thing, and the frequent Viciſſitudes of human Affairs, requires abſolutely, that this be the Rule; and all the World have ever admitted it, excepting a Handful of Perſons in our own Age and Country; who undoubtedly deſerve both Pity and Eſteem, ſo far as they go upon Principle; but whoſe Notions, were they to ſpread, would produce inextricable Confuſion throughout the Earth.

And very happily Scripture is as clear in this Point, as Reaſon. *There is no Power*, ſaith

* Rom. xiii. 5.

St.

St. *Paul, but of God: the Powers that be*, the ſeveral Governments actually ſubſiſting in each Nation, *are ordained of God. Whoſoever therefore reſiſteth the Power, reſiſteth the Ordinance of God* *. Again, St. *Peter* directs all Chriſtians to *ſubmit themſelves to every Ordinance of Man*, every human Eſtabliſhment, *for the Lord's Sake: for ſo is the Will of God* †. And accordingly they did ſo from the Beginning of the Goſpel: and amidſt as many Uſurpations and bad Titles, in the *Roman* Empire, as the Hiſtory of any Nation hath ever recorded, followed no other Maxim, than that of obeying faithfully the Authority, to which the Wiſdom of Heaven, ſuperintending all Things, from Time to Time ſubjected them. But when Perſons have owned a Government, not only by receiving and claiming the Benefits of it, but by taking ſolemn Oaths to it, and joining in publick Prayers for its Preſervation: one or both of which I preſume we have all done, theſe additional Ties render Diſloyalty afterwards, groſs Perfidy and abandoned Profligateneſs.

We cannot then reaſonably doubt, to whom our Submiſſion is due: and we can ſeldom, if ever, doubt, at leaſt in any Point that will affect our Practice, how far it is to be carried. If our Superiors command us to do any Thing, which we cannot lawfully, *we ought to obey God rather than Men* ‡. But otherwiſe we

* Rom. xiii. 1, 2. † 1 Pet. ii. 13, 15. ‡ Acts v. 29.

are

are to act as they require us: and if they treat us hardly, or manage the Concerns of the Nation wrongly, we are to bear it with Patience. For conſider: the Affairs of Government are always numerous and difficult: ſometimes uncommonly intangled and perplexed. They, who manage them, are liable to the ſame Miſtakes, ſubject to the ſame Paſſions, and expoſed to more Temptations, than other Men. Therefore not only Miſcarriages and ill Accidents will happen; but Neglects and Failures, Partialities and Grievances, muſt be expected in the Behaviour of publick Perſons, as well as private. And whoever will not ſit down contented under ſome Things of this Sort, reſolves in effect never to be contented at all, and demands a Perfection from others, to which he cannot pretend himſelf. But then further, as there will be always ſomething amiſs in political Conduct, ſo there will always, either through ill Deſign or Ignorance or Inconſiderateneſs, be Fault found with Actions that deſerve it not; or the Blame laid where it ſhould not. And though Miſmanagements ought certainly to be rectified, when they can by lawful and prudent Methods; and they who attempt this are intitled both to candid Interpretation, and in Caſes of Moment, to Aſſiſtance, from others: yet they ſhould examine themſelves very ſtrictly, and all who are concerned ſhould examine with Care, not only whether they deſign well, but whether they conſider impartially, and judge rightly;

rightly; whether they uſe allowable Means to attain their imagined good Ends; and whether, on the whole, they are not more likely to do Harm, than Service.

But ſuppoſing Oppoſition made with all theſe Precautions, which it ſeldom is; and yet made ineffectually: if the Point be of any great Conſequence, without Queſtion it is very unhappy. Yet ſtill, having Recourſe to violent Meaſures would bring on ſo many obvious Miſchiefs, and for the moſt Part ſuch Multitudes of unforeſeen ones too, with ſo much Uncertainty of making Things better, and ſo dreadful a Chance of making them one Way or another worſe, that every wiſe as well as good Man, if the Caſe be in any Degree tolerable, will much rather chuſe, to wait for a Remedy from the Providence of God, than think of applying deſperate ones of his own.

There is indeed a Poſſibility, which, but for a peculiar Caſe which was our own, it would ſcarce be proper to mention, that Government may be ſo entirely perverted from its original Deſign, by ſome, who ſhare in it; ſuch exorbitant Powers uſurped, and ſo deſtructive an Uſe made of them, that the Duty of Obedience muſt give Way to that of Self-preſervation. But this can be only when the Neceſſity is extreme, and the Evil inſupportable; the Danger of it imminent, and by every

every other Way unavoidable; the Relief confeſſedly real, and viſibly within reach. Such were the Circumſtances of our Fathers at the Revolution. But Perſons are not to imagine, that ſuch frequently happen; or that any Thing like them happens, as often as they fancy, or even feel, a few Inconveniencies; but to bear them, were they many and heavy, with a virtuous Patience and ſacred Regard to the publick Tranquillity. For certainly the Government of the cruel and vicious Emperor *Nero* was extremely bad, when St. *Paul*, notwithſtanding, enjoined ſo ſtrongly dutiful Obedience to it, as you may read in the thirteenth Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans*. How religiouſly then, and how cheerfully, ought We to obey thoſe, who have the Rule over us: ſince undeniably the Truth is, and long Experience ought to extinguiſh all Suſpicion to the contrary, that they have not the leaſt Deſign of hurting us in any one Reſpect, but a ſincere Deſire of ſecuring and promoting all our Intereſts, domeſtick and foreign: that almoſt all the Inconveniencies, which we have ſuffered, and the Burdens, that we undergo, have ariſen from the Wickedneſs or Folly of the Nations round us, or from our own: that our eſtabliſhed Religion is purer, our Liberty greater, our Property ſafer, than that of any other People upon Earth: that whatever in our Condition may want to be rectified and improved, we may do it by peaceful Methods, whenever we agree upon it:

that we have no one good Effect to promiſe ourſelves from diſloyal Attempts; but a ſure Proſpect, were they to ſucceed, of every Evil of every Kind, to ourſelves and our Poſterity.

In the ſecond Part of the Text, the Apoſtle proceeds from Obedience, the primary Duty of Subjects, as ſuch, to the other, and conſequential Parts of their Behaviour under Government. And here his firſt Rule is a very comprehenſive one, that they *be ready to every good Work:* in general, to fulfil all the Obligations of Life; in particular, thoſe of their own Station. An univerſal Regard to Religion and Piety, Juſtice and Benevolence, Sobriety and Temperance, is the very Groundwork of ſocial Happineſs. It gives Courage and Spirit, Health and Plenty; Truſt and Union at home, Reſpect and Honour abroad: it keeps Proſperity from being dangerous, and fills Adverſity with Comfort and Hope. But then, beſides the common Ties, which bind all Men, the Apoſtle includes in this Precept, what he could not ſo well mention ſingly, the particular Ties of each Man, belonging to his reſpective Situation and Employment. It requires therefore, that Perſons in Authority be faithful to their Truſt, watchful and diligent, upright and diſintereſted; or to ſpeak in the Language of Scripture, *Men of Truth, fearing God, hating Covetouſneſs*:* that Perſons of

* Exod. xviii. 21.

Quality

Quality and Fortune acknowledge their Subjection to the ſame Laws, human and divine, with their Inferiors; and be careful to uſe the advantageous Ground, upon which they ſtand, chiefly to pour down Benefits, and ſhed abroad good Influences, on all beneath them: and laſtly, that thoſe, who are of lower Eſtate, be content with their Condition, yet induſtrious by honeſt Means to better it; pay Reſpect to their Superiors in Word and Deed, proportionably to their Degree, and *render to all their Dues; Fear, to whom Fear is due, Honour, to whom Honour* *. Thus, by a regular Subordination and mutual Serviceableneſs, every one will concur to make the Weight of Government eaſy to thoſe, who ſuſtain it; and the Benefits great to all, that are placed under it. And the Bleſſing of Heaven will not fail to crown the virtuous Endeavours of ſuch a People with Succeſs.

But though every good Work is beneficial to Society, and every ſinful one detrimental: yet ſome Sins are more directly pernicious, than others: and require a more eſpecial Caution to be given againſt them. Such are the two, which uſually go together, Calumny and Faction. Theſe therefore the Apoſtle prohibits eſpecially, in the following Part of the Text: *To ſpeak evil of no Man, to be no Brawlers.*

* Rom. xiii. 7.

The original Word, in the former of these Rules, being that, from which the Name of Blasphemy is derived, commonly denotes in Scripture, using reproachful Language of those, who are peculiarly intitled to Respect and Reverence: as, in the first Place, the great God; and, in a lower Sense, Persons who bear his Authority on Earth. Considering therefore, to what Point the Passage before us relates, we must apprehend this Injunction to be directed principally against the Wickedness of such, as St. *Peter* saith *are not afraid*, or, translating literally, *do not tremble, to speak evil of Dignities* *: where again the Word is, to *blaspheme*. Here then St. *Paul* must be understood to command, that we neither allow ourselves, nor encourage others, in disrespectful and injurious Expressions concerning our Rulers, whether supreme or subordinate: but preserve in our own Minds, and those of all Men, so far as we can, that Honour and Regard for them, which is the strongest Bond of Government, of Peace and Order. In Charity it must be supposed, that few of the many, who violate this Precept, do it with ill Design. But at best, for Persons to entertain and spread Notions to the Disadvantage of their Superiors, which, in the Case of an Equal to whom they wished well, they would immediately see were groundless, and, it may be, absurd, is a very criminal Thoughtlessness; and often produces most unhappy Effects. There-

* 2 Pet. ii. 10.

fore,

fore, when we hear ſuch Things ſaid, we ſhould always reflect, how many there are, whom Prepoſſeſſion, or Intereſt, or Reſentment, may induce to report Untruths or Uncertainties; how many others do the ſame Thing from mere Wantonneſs of Invention, or Deſire to appear knowing; and indeed, how eaſily Facts, or material Circumſtances, are, without Intention, miſrelated or miſunderſtood. We ſhould call to mind, whether we have not, perhaps more than once before now, been led into a firm Belief of many a Story, for which we have afterwards been convinced there was never the leaſt Foundation; and learn from thence a prudent Diſtruſt for the future. Nay further ſtill, before we paſs our Judgment ſo freely on the Characters of publick Perſons, and the Adminiſtration of publick Affairs, we ſhould ſpend a little Time in judging ourſelves; and conſidering well, not only whether we are ſo impartial and candid as we ought, but whether we have indeed a ſufficient Capacity, and ſufficient Information, to determine at all about ſuch Matters. Unleſs we can be ſure of this, about which Multitudes, we find, are daily miſtaken; we ſhould be very fearful of venturing beyond our Depth; or, in Scripture Language, *exerciſing ourſelves in great Matters, which are too high for us* *; and ought in many Caſes to go but little further, than our good Wiſhes and Prayers: leaving the reſt to thoſe that are intruſted with

* Pſ. cxxxi. 2.

it, and *ſtudying to be quiet, and do our own Buſineſs* *.

But reproachful Diſcourſe, though our Superiors be ſpared in it, is fully miſchievous enough, to deſerve being included, as doubtleſs the Apoſtle deſigned it ſhould, in his general Prohibition of Evil-ſpeaking. Private Quarrels, ariſing from this Source, have often produced very fatal publick Diſſenſions. And were it never to have that ill Effect, it would ſtill have many others of the worſt Kind. The good Opinion of thoſe, amongſt whom we live, is by Nature, and with great Reaſon, extremely dear to us: and robbing us of it is taking from us one of the chief Things, that make Life agreeable. Every one feels this in his own Caſe. No Injury occaſions bitterer Uneaſineſs, or keener Reſentments; yet none is more frequently done: not only in Anger, which however, were it the beſt grounded in the World, is by no Means an Excuſe for ſaying juſt what one will; but in perfect Good-humour, heedleſsly and gaily, and for mere Want of ſomething elſe to ſay. An Offence, committed with ſo little Scruple, is uſually retaliated with juſt as little. And thus the cruelleſt and moſt barbarous Imputations, ſometimes obliquely hinted at, others directly ſpoken out, make up a great Part of the Entertainment of Converſation. They, who pretend to condemn them, hearken to

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 11.

them,

them, and repeat them notwithſtanding: and almoſt every Body goes on, more or leſs, contributing their Share to what they complain of, all the while, moſt heavily. Now though all the ill Things, that we tell of others, were true; yet both Chriſtian Charity, and common Humanity, would forbid the needleſs Publication of them. And one ſhould think private Intereſt too might incline us to ſet the Example of ſuch Forbearance: as we ourſelves either have, or may have, Occaſion for gentle Treatment in return, and a friendly Veil to be drawn over our Failings. But if a Report of this Kind be falſe; then the raiſing it, and in Proportion the carrying it on, is doing a moſt hainous Injury to an innocent Perſon; which may ſpread we know not how far, and laſt we know not how long, and do him we know not what Harm; without our being able, were we willing afterwards, to reſtore to him, at all completely, the good Name that we have taken from him: which yet we muſt heartily endeavour to do, whatever Shame we may bring upon ourſelves by it, before we can hope for our Maker's Forgiveneſs.

The ſecond Prohibition of the Apoſtle is levelled againſt the vehement Spirit of Party and Faction: *To be no Brawlers*, not contentious. Doubtleſs there may be Differences of Opinion and Conduct, about national Concerns, of ſuch Importance, that every one ought to intereſt himſelf in them, and even zealouſly.

But then it ſhould be done upon reaſonable Grounds; and without Paſſion or Bitterneſs. We ſhould imagine nothing to be of greater Moment, than it really is. We ſhould neither ſpeak nor think worſe of the oppoſite Side, than we find, on a cool Inquiry, they deſerve: we ſhould judge of no Man's Character, by the hurtful Conſequences, either of his Notions or his Behaviour; if there be any Reaſon to think, that he doth not ſee them: we ſhould on no Account violate the Laws of Truth, Juſtice and Humanity, to diſtreſs the moſt obſtinate Adverſary; or to gain the moſt favourite and material Point. In Matters of more Indifference, the Conteſt, if there is any, ſhould in all Reaſon be carried on with leſs Warmth: and every one be freely allowed, to follow his own Way of Thinking, and promote the Intereſt of his own Friends, without Offence. To this equitable Temper we ſhould firſt form our own Minds, and then ſtudy to introduce it amongſt others: making it our Buſineſs to diminiſh the Subject, and narrow the Bounds, of Contention; and each labouring to abate the Vehemence of his own Side, with whom he may hope to have Credit. But how ſmall ſoever his Succeſs may be in that, each may at leaſt watch over himſelf: be on his Guard againſt over-great Credulity; reſiſt the Temptation of countenancing ſerviceable Falſehoods; avoid, as much as poſſible, whatever may ſeem an unkind Action, and moſt reſolutely abſtain from doing an unjuſt

juſt one. For whatever is diſhonourable and baſe, ill-natured or uncharitable, in our Oppoſers, is ſo in Us: neither our Paſſions, nor our Intereſts, nor the common Practice of the World, is the proper Rule of our Behaviour, or will juſtify it another Day before the holy Judge of the whole Earth. All theſe Things are extremely plain: every Body owns them: yet few or none regard them. Bad Perſons have their Ends to ſerve by tranſgreſſing Bounds: very good Perſons are enticed, or provoked, to go on inſenſibly much further than they ſhould: and each Side is ſo full of Indignation at the Faults of the other, that they overlook their own entirely. The Conſequence of this is, that almoſt every Body applying what is ſaid againſt the Iniquities of Party, not at all to reform themſelves, but ſolely to load their Adverſaries with Imputations, they grow worſe by what is intended to make them better: whereas we ſhould learn from the Failings of others, whom we are but too like, to examine, whether we are not guilty of ſome of the ſame: and readily grant mutual Forgiveneſs to thoſe common Errors, which we have all great Need to be forgiven by our Maker. Thus we ſhould ſoon quiet and ſubdue this evil Spirit: which in private Life makes Men diſagreeable and injurious, intemperate and riotous, idle and negligent of their proper Buſineſs: and whilſt it fills their Minds with other Diſtinctions, often

ten unmeaning, yet always miſchievous: deſtroys from off the Earth, in Proportion as it prevails, the moſt important and neceſſary of all Diſtinctions, that between good Perſons and bad. For amongſt the Zealots on every Side, the loweſt and the vileſt Creature, that is uſeful to their Cauſe, or even but noiſy for it, ſhall meet with high Favour: and the Worthieſt who oppoſes them, be it ever ſo fairly and decently, be it in ever ſo great a Trifle, or for ever ſo ſtrong Reaſons, ſhall not only be ſlighted, but ill treated and abhorred. Then for publick Affairs: the Effect of this unhappy Temper on Them is, if poſſible, ſtill worſe. The End of Society and Government is to unite Men in promoting their general Intereſt: and the Aim of Party is to diſunite them entirely. The whole Study of each Faction is to advance their own ſeparate Strength, overlooking the publick Welfare; to prevent the other from doing any Thing beneficial or popular, to deceive or force them into Meaſures abſurd and pernicious; then to accuſe them for the Omiſſions or Miſtakes, nay the unavoidable Inconveniencies, of which the Accuſers themſelves have been the Cauſe. Thus they labour unweariedly the Ruin one of another: and too frequently, rather than fail of it, will riſque, or even contrive, the Ruin of the whole. For this wicked Vehemence increaſes in Men by unexpected and aſtoniſhing Degrees; and the wiſeſt, when they once

once give Way to it, cannot foreſee how far it may carry them, amidſt ſuch a Number of Things to provoke, or entice, or entangle them ſo, that they may come to do at length, what they leaſt thought of, nay, what they moſt abominated. But though party Quarrels produce every where very hurtful Conſequences; yet, as they have Room for riſing to the greateſt Heights, ſo they are capable of doing the greateſt Harm, in Countries of civil and religious Freedom: the Happineſs of which, though on all other Accounts invaluable, is grievouſly ſubject to this one Alloy; that the bold and active Spirit, which naturally accompanies Liberty, hurries Men on, in various Inſtances, to wild Behaviour; and particularly carries publick Diſputes to moſt immoral and dangerous Lengths. Here therefore St. *Paul*'s Advice * is of the utmoſt Importance. God be thanked, that we have followed it much better of late, than formerly: and God grant, that we never relapſe into wrong Behaviour on this Head again. *Brethren, ye have been called unto Liberty: only uſe not Liberty for an Occaſion to the Fleſh, but by Love ſerve one another. For all the Law is fulfilled in one Word: Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf.*

* Gal. v. 14, 15, 16.

This

This Rule of being mutually ſerviceable by Love, is the ſame, in Effect, with that, which the laſt Words of the Text preſcribe; that we ſhould be *gentle, ſhewing all Meekneſs unto all Men.* Our Paſſions frequently prompt us, not only to do the contrary, but even to defend it. And yet one ſhould think it might be eaſily ſeen, that a Proneneſs to reſent and diſoblige, take Things amiſs, and do Things for others to take amiſs, whatever ill-natured Pleaſure there may be in it juſt at the Time, is neither a happy, nor a virtuous Diſpoſition: much leſs one allowed by the Goſpel towards *our Brethren, for whom Chriſt died**: but that indulging it muſt gradually ſour our Tempers, hurt our Healths, at leaſt deſtroy our Comfort; beſides the ample Return for it, that we ſhall be too likely to meet with from the World; and the dreadful Guilt, that we incur by it in the Sight of God. So that whatever Difference of Intereſts there may be in other Reſpects, yet in one Point the Intereſt of all Men is clearly the ſame: that Gentleneſs and Meekneſs be exerciſed, Good-nature and obliging Behaviour ſtudiouſly cultivated. This is not only the Way to enjoy Life, but to act rightly in it. Such a Turn of Mind will enable us, and no other can, to judge reaſonably both of Things and Perſons; to diſcern how far Men's Ac-

* Rom. xiv. 15.

tions

tions and Deſigns are juſtifiable or otherwiſe: and what Allowance ought to be made, as often ſurely not a little ought, for early Prejudices, warm Paſſions, ſtrong Provocations, alluring Proſpects, eaſy Miſtakes, and undeſigned Neglects. Then further, preſerving our own Tempers calm is the ſureſt Method to compoſe and win upon others: to open their Eyes, to conciliate their Eſteem; and, which is the great Point, that we ſhould have in our View, to make all worthy Perſons on all Sides, of whom it may be hoped there are many more, than we can ſometimes believe, agree with one another in whatever is of Importance, and bear with one another in whatever is not. With the utmoſt Reaſon therefore did the Apoſtle give this Direction in the laſt Place, of *ſhewing all Meekneſs unto all Men*, as finiſhing the Character of a good Subject, and providing completely for the Happineſs of a Nation: that every one ſhould *follow the Things, which make for Peace** ; carry himſelf with Humanity, and prudent Friendlineſs, to each of his Fellow-ſubjects, without Exception; moderate his juſteſt Zeal with equal Charity; and copy, in the whole of his Conduct, that moſt beautiful and excellent Character of *Mordecai*, in the laſt Verſe of the Book of *Eſther*; that he was *accepted of the Multitude of his Brethren, ſeeking the Wealth of*

* Rom. xiv. 19.

his

his People, and ſpeaking Peace to all his Seed. God grant us to be every one thus minded; and reward us with his Bleſſings, on ourſelves, our King and the whole Royal Family, through *Jeſus* Chriſt, our Lord. Amen.

F I N I S.

Myrtle cottage
Lew Down May 26th 1919

To the Revd J B Wollocombe

Dear Sir

I am again preparing Annual Statement of accounts Lew Down Friendly Society Thanking you for your Subscriptions in years past shall be most pleased to recieve your donation for the year ending Ladaday 1919. we are having our Annual Gathering on Whit Monday would you kindly come and join us Roll call 10×30 Divine Service parish Church 11-30

Luncheon at the Blue Lion Mile
at 1 PM Kindest regards
& thanking you in
Anticipation
I am dear Sir
Your faithfully Etc
William Ball

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